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ABSTRACT

This collection of articles focuses on the current status and future of counseling in the community college. The volume contains the following chapters: (1) "Counseling for Today's Community College Students," by William A. Robbins, which focuses on the characteristics of developmental counseling and the crises it faces in community colleges; (2) "Primary Roles for Community College Counselors," by Jane E. Matson, which deals with both operational and relationship roles; (3) "Special Roles with Special Students," by William Moore, Jr., which argues that the community college student population is dominated by groups generally termed "special"; (4) "Team Roles for Counselors: Creating Synergism," by Charles R. Dassance and Jacquelyn B. Tulloch, which provides a rationale for the involvement of non-counseling personnel in student development; (5) "Advisement and Counseling Challenges Facing Community College Educators: The Miami-Dade Experience," by Richard B. Schinoff; (6) "Counseling in a Multi-College System: The Los Amigos Experience," by Alice S. Thurston, which reviews survey findings regarding counseling practices; (7) "Preparing and Nurturing Professional Counselors," by Don G. Creamer, which advocates special training for community college counselors; (8) "Organizational Alternatives for the Future of Student Development, by Robert B. Young, which presents community-based and human resources development models for organizational change; (9) "The Decade Ahead for Community College Counseling," by Alice S. Thurston, which urges counselors to determine their basic priorities in order to preserve the counseling function; and (10) "Counseling and Academic Advisement," by Jim Palmer, which provides an annotated bibliography of relevant ERIC materials. (LAL)

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

# *Counseling: A Crucial Function for the 1980s*

Alice S. Thurston, William A. Robbins, *Editors*

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**NEW DIRECTIONS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES**
**Sponsored by the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges**
ARTHUR M. COHEN, *Editor-in-Chief*
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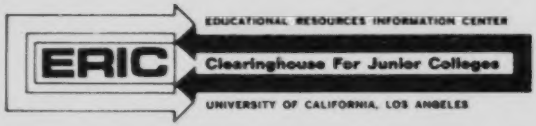


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All students are special. However, more than half of community college students are minority, foreign students including war and political refugees, veterans, and disadvantaged; often they come with records of past low academic performance. Special services should serve as catalysts, not crutches, helping students become intellectually and emotionally tough.

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# *Editors' Notes*

This volume grew out of the concern of its authors for the survival and restructuring of counseling in the community colleges as a vital service in the 1980s. As Dale Tillery points out in his introduction, "Today, as never before, students need *both* excellent instruction... as well as counseling and support services... Their relationship is symbiotic." Financial and other constraints are making this essential relationship more difficult than ever to achieve.

In Chapter One, William Robbins writes about the impact of changing times and the differing, often confusing roles of counselors in community colleges. As a former dean of students and a counselor educator, he provides a definition of community college counseling, discusses crises confronting it, and identifies as a basic need "a clear demonstration of professionalism."

Also, from the point of view of a counselor educator and national consultant, Jane Matson in the next chapter offers two broad approaches to counselor role definitions: operational roles and relationship roles. These functional areas provide a more flexible and dynamic framework than the traditional laundry list of counselor tasks.

In Chapter Three, William Moore reserves the special category for foreign students because they lack proficiency in English. To grant minority students special treatment can only happen when those who have responsibility for the student are irresponsible. Others generally considered special are really those who make up the normal enrollment. Relating academic deficiencies to social or economic factors has not been helpful in improving the teaching and learning process. Next, Charles Dassance and Jacquelyn Tulloch, both student personnel administrators, deal with counselor-related goals that depend on effective involvement of personnel other than counselors. They present the rationale for synergistic team efforts, and illustrate the concept with resolution of a practical problem requiring an all-college effort.

In Chapter Five, the Miami-Dade experience, as it meets the challenges of assessment, course and program placement, developmental studies, retention, and accountability, is described by Richard Schinoff, a dean of students, who documents the role of counselors in a comprehensive program. Counselors must address both the crisis in literacy and the crisis in delivery of a quality educational program.

Then, Alice Thurston, a retired college president and student personnel consultant, describes findings of a survey of counseling practices in a large, multi-unit community college system where the role of counselors was unclear and generally undervalued. Without strong central office leadership and support, chasms have developed between instructors and counselors, with the result that many students seem relatively untouched by their often brief exposure to higher education. The Los Amigos picture is not atypical.

Don Creamer, former dean of students and now professor in the community college field, begins Chapter Seven with the premise that community college counselor roles are sufficiently different to merit special preparation. He describes several major thrusts: the educational generalist, the counselor/service specialist, the educational programmer, and the developmentalist. Each role requires a different graduate preparation and skills.

Robert Young, a professor of higher education who trains student personnel professionals, looks at the future of student development as a concept and the need for organizational change. Two organizational models are suggested: the community-based alternative and a human resource development alternative. These structures would be responsive to social and economic change as well as organizational theory.

Alice Thurston concludes the volume with an attempt to read the portents; they underscore the need for long overdue changes in ways described by the various contributors. Rather than simply trying to do more with less, a more productive alternative would be to analyze, not infer, students' needs and make priority decisions as to what can be done well within the resources available. In the months and years ahead, the fate of community college counseling will be determined not only by budget retrenchment but also by actions of counselors themselves.

Alice S. Thurston
William A. Robbins
Editors

*Alice S. Thurston is retired president of Los Angeles Valley College.*

*William A. Robbins is associate professor of community college education and counselor education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.*

# *Introduction*

From its beginning, the American community college has stressed the importance of parity between student support services and classroom instruction. Today, more than ever before, students need not only excellent instruction to help prepare them for work or advanced study and to help them achieve personal fulfillment but also counseling and support services to help them make fundamental decisions about the uses of education in their career and life goals. If these outcomes are to be achieved, fiscal support, personal rewards, and professional preparation are of equal importance to both counseling and instructional faculties of community colleges.

Teaching and counseling are not the "two-world" enigma in community colleges that they are in many four-year colleges and universities. Teaching takes place in many settings in community colleges, and all professional staff take part. Similiarly, counseling and advising are literally everybody's business. This symbiosis of teaching and service is not easy to come by, and colleges must be ever vigilant in reaffirming goals and behaviors that seek to serve the whole student. Professional counselors and their colleagues in student services must play primary leadership roles in working toward that end with faculty and administration, as well as with students. I have joined others over the years in conceptualizing this institutional responsibility of the counselor and in preparing leaders for this essential function of community colleges.

Parity between classroom teaching and counseling can be a sometimes thing and is subject to compromise in times of fiscal constraint. The ebb and flow of understanding and full support for student support services in general—and particularly for counseling services—is apparent in what I view as the four generations of community colleges. These generations are defined by the following time periods: (1) 1900–1930, post-school college; (2) 1930–1950, the junior college; (3) 1950–1970, the community college; (4) 1970–1980, the community learning centers. A fifth generation in the future will be 1980–1990: the regional community college. Over the generations, counseling has become increasingly important to the stated mission of the community college. However, such importance has not always been matched by the necessary resources or by rewards for counselors. This inequity has been exacerbated by the ever-increasing diversity of students, their

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needs for special support, and the growing variety of skills counselors need in order to help students make informed decisions about learning and careers.

I am pleased to add this brief introduction of encouragement and advocacy for the distinguished authors of this important new sourcebook on counseling in community colleges. These colleagues have become known to me personally through their years of leadership and good practice. It is my belief that they will give their attention to ways of overcoming flaws in student support services that have developed during the past decade. This has been a period of expansion of services, primarily through federal funding. It has also been a period of division of services and of people who must work together in the interest of student development. As a result, some new programs have developed on the fringes of institutions, without proper status, professional development, or rewards for staff.

Since community colleges are serious about the quality of student development, there will need to be greater integration within the domain of student support services and between this function and the diverse instructional programs of community colleges. The learner, as well as the public and its representatives, will have increased confidence in the accountability of community colleges as we attend to the learning and career needs of students, design programs and services that fit them, and demonstrate learner outcomes through follow-up and other institutional studies. What challenges community college counselors and their colleagues will face during the coming decade!



*Dale Tillery is professor emeritus of higher education at the University of California, Berkeley.*

*Community college counseling is eclectic and collaborative in nature, operating across the entire college and standing at the very core of a strong student services program.*

# *Counseling for Today's Community College Students*

*William A. Robbins*

This volume is about counseling as it functions in a unique arena of American postsecondary education, the community college. Despite the significant contribution counseling has made and continues to make in helping the community college achieve its goals, major problems have arisen during the past decade. The place of counseling is no longer secure; indeed, in the past it may only have appeared to be so.

In order to analyze these problems and also to explore the possibilities of what community college counseling might be, the editors have invited several leaders to reflect on the changing roles of counseling, special problems, intriguing ideas, and future directions. Thoughts about the future are particularly troublesome. Over and over again, it seems, the two possible scenarios posed by Breneman and Nelson (1981), one that is optimistic and one that is pessimistic, confront the writers. Who knows what the eighties and nineties will bring in terms of changes that can affect the roles and practices of community college counselors?

Certainly the scene changed in the sixties and seventies. Witness the effects on counseling practice of changes in the nature of the student group. Older, female, minority, and part-time students

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enrolled in great numbers and, in doing so, brought very different needs into the college scene. The increasing number of part-time students alone (a heavy majority of 63 percent of community college enrollment in 1981) has presented the counseling program with a major difficulty. The presumption cannot possibly be supported that adequate help is really available for meeting these students' career, academic, and personal needs. Nevertheless, members of these groups are enrolled students; they are there, with their hopes and anxieties and endless other human characteristics. Can we expect to find adequate help for these students from teaching faculty members whose preparation has been almost totally in a subject matter, or from personnel in community agencies, or from family or friends, or from the students themselves, or just from exposure to the environment of the college? Each of the above may make a useful contribution, to be sure, but the community college turns to the professional counselor on its staff for the expertise that will provide needed additional help to these students.

**Differences in Counseling Approaches**

Community college counselors across the country differ very much in their roles and in the methods they use. They not only differ within their world of community colleges but also, as a group at least, they tend to differ in comparison with counselors in the four-year colleges and in social agencies.

Some counselors use predominantly the traditional, intensive, therapeutically oriented, one-to-one approach they learned in graduate school. The model, akin to a medical one with its presumption of disease to be treated, requires such intensive and generally extended listening, waiting, and perceiving before the counselor is able to react and thus intervene that the counselor faces limits as to the number of student clients he or she can see in a day. As a result, only a few community colleges maintain this approach—sometimes to the regret of those counselors who are restless to practice what excited them in graduate school or in their former work and who are anxious to help solve pressing student problems using the insights that can come through the exploration of feelings and attitudes.

A different approach—or perhaps set of practices would describe it more accurately—is found increasingly in the community college, partly because of the nature of the institution. Community college counseling is often eclectic in nature, operating across the entire college, and it is adventurous, with an endless variety of approaches to

meet student needs. Counselors provide assistance to students through a vast array of helpful activities – providing information; assessing; making referrals on academic, career, and personal matters; making educational judgments; and posing incisive questions to students that are meant to affect their thinking and decision making. In addition, counselors increase their student exposure by engaging in group or training activities, conducting workshops, leading group counseling sessions, engaging in teaching either in the discipline departments or in human-development-related courses, and training students and paraprofessionals for orientation, student-activity, and community tasks. Instead of having only a few student appointments a day, counselors often deal with dozens of people a day, only some of whom may be enrolled students, and they do this both on- and off-campus. Besides the office, other places are familiar sites for counseling activity, such as the campus center, classroom, learning laboratory, and even area shopping center.

It is small wonder that there is confusion over the counselor's role. This eclectic activity bears little resemblance to what the world at large thinks a counselor does. There is, however, reason for satisfaction as well as anxiety in this varied situation. The satisfaction lies in the counselor's evident commitment, style, and conscientious effort. These factors provide a sound base for the growth of community college counseling, particularly in the direction of its increased professionalism. The unfortunate aspect is that so many community college counselors, using an approach with all the rich variety described above, have not thought through the meaning of what they are doing as a whole, of what counseling can and should really be in these different settings. As Creamer (Chapter Seven, this volume) points out, they function without gaining the knowledge needed, without the necessary pre-service and in-service training, and without developing proper skills through clinical and internship experiences.

**Understanding Counseling in the Community College**

Community college counseling can be considered a professional activity that provides help to students, either as individuals or in groups, in meeting their personal and educational needs for development and that is characterized by consultation, advisement, instruction, and collaborative skills. Such a definition interprets community college counseling as a core professional function within the broader thrust of student services. This is very appropriate to the community college situation, where counseling is the heart of a strong student ser-

vices program. It also needs to be seen as central to the work of the college. Indeed, the definition fits the picture of much counseling practice that has won general approval, and that will help immeasurably in dealing with problems of weakness.

The definition relies on the significant historic statement issued by the American Council on Education (ACE) half a century ago regarding the student personnel point of view. This concept provided a holistic view of the student based on the need to see "the student as a whole—his intellectual capacity and achievement, his emotional make-up, his physical condition, his social relationships, his vocational aptitudes and skills, his moral and religious values, his economic resources, and his esthetic appreciations" (American Council on Education, 1937, p. 1). Paving the way for major changes that were to come in just a few short years, the ACE statement called for college student services that would put emphasis on "the development of the student as a person, rather than upon his intellectual training alone" (American Council on Education, 1937, p. 1).

The definition relies as well on the substantive contribution of student development theory described in recent literature (Brown, 1972; Creamer, 1980; Delworth, Hanson, and Associates, 1980; Miller and Prince, 1976). Closely integrated within the whole instructional enterprise, since cognitive and affective growth must be seen as inexorably linked, student development education continues to build on a holistic rather than a specialized, fragmented view of education. It further assumes a collaborative effort on the part of all concerned educators toward accomplishing a personalized education for each student. Undergirding its student development model is an emphasis on "intentional student development" designed "to meet the needs of all students, to plan change rather than react to it, and to engage the full academic community in this collaborative effort" (Miller and Prince, 1976, p. 21).

This approach to counseling is consistent with the thrust toward "intentional developmental change in students throughout the life cycle" using developmental psychology and adult developmental theory, which was recently outlined in broad scope with the most persuasive credibility for the entire changing postsecondary scene by Chickering and Associates (1981, p. 2).

Finally, the definition provides a framework for this volume's analysis of counseling as a discreet but highly interactive function within the community college organizational system, geared toward what the institution's mission is or should be—the development of students. This approach to counseling should support the challenge to all community

college practitioners, whether teaching faculty or administrative or support service personnel, to provide a supportive climate for high-quality educational services. It is important that they also remember that the community college will maintain its strength only as it keeps as its primary focus the meeting of human needs through the educational and career preparation avenues it provides and toward which each and every institutional function can contribute.

**Crises Confronting Community College Counseling**

Community college counseling faces major difficulties. Some of these difficulties result from the dilemmas of mission and budget confronting American higher education. Some difficulties that have to do with philosophy and purpose are unique to counseling as it seeks to "get its act together." Other difficulties are intrainstitutional, having to do with the practices of counseling as it functions within the total system.

First, the present crisis in higher education, only partially reflected in acute budget problems, may result in long-term reconceptualization and reorganization of the community college situation. Despite general agreement on the value of counseling in meeting student needs, its demise can no longer be considered an unlikely eventuality – and certainly not in those institutions where it has already happened! External fiscal problems are so great that they are turning the post-secondary world into a jungle of institutions competing for public funds. Out of agonizing decision making, colleges currently are having to take retrenchment and reorganizational steps that spare no sector. Counseling is particularly vulnerable to some forms of accountability, since in only a few cases does it generate academic credit (the coin of the realm) that reflects a flow of students toward the degree or certificate. Unfortunately, community college counseling has not developed that clearly essential position that would ensure a favorable review.

Second, community college counseling, as all-too-often practiced, bears a serious structural weakness due to an absence of philosophical grounding that should be governing every aspect of its practice. The work of the counselors does not appear to be theoretically based. In the eyes of many colleagues, it lacks the requisites of a profession. It is perceived as consisting of extensive, multitudinous forms of service, lots of good work to help students, but work that is carried out in an ad hoc, almost trial-and-error, fashion, where one's amount of "busyness for a good cause" is expected to be the measure of success. In order to correct this situation of professional chaos, the counseling

function should be planned and carried out systematically in a way that will accomplish a clear, respected end related to the student's development. The counseling program should be established on a well-understood, theoretical base, implemented within and by the college as a whole according to a program design that ties together ends and means, and it should ensure that its processes and outcomes are subjected to an appropriate evaluation design. Benchmarks of a professional approach should call for the counselor to identify a problem needing a counseling response, decide upon an objective, select carefully a strategy or activity (based on a prediction that the strategy used will solve the problem), implement the strategy or activity, and finally evaluate the results.

Happily, in the absence of such a clear demonstration of professionalism, there are usually "friends in court" — those who appreciate the counselor's contribution, who can help stave off the judgment day. Yet the weakness is a serious one; in some situations it can be fatal. To survive, community college counseling must establish itself professionally within the academic community in a mutually respecting relationship primarily with those in the academic disciplines. It cannot survive significantly until this weakness is repaired. (Because of the very different approach they use, traditional counselor colleagues in the university may not face this problem.) Both Creamer (Chapter Seven, this volume) and Young (Chapter Eight) discuss implications of this weakness in their chapters, the former for reasons of improving professional preparation and the latter because of the need to redesign counseling's basic rationale.

Third, the actual practices of counseling within the community college system lack proper coherence even in terms of their own defined purposes and expectations, as well as in regard to the highest priority purposes and expectations of the college. Because the varied counseling activities of an eclectic approach seem to lack that single focus that characterizes the work of the traditional counseling practitioner, the community college counselor's role is often misunderstood, unappreciated, even abused. The counselor, some charge, is trying to be all things to all people. He or she can even be given jobs that no one else wants or feels able to do!

In order to try to make a recognized contribution, to win support and show their value, counselors often become irresponsibly overburdened. They seek or cannot avoid accepting various forms of service in the college, such as with basic skills education or with the extracurriculum, faculty advisership, career planning, community projects,

and staff development programs. The ironic result of all this, however, is that instead of making their college berths more secure, these counselors' efforts may only reinforce the picture of professional work that is insufficiently focused, does not meet accountability standards of efficiency and effectiveness, and falls short of satisfying such criteria as being selective in the determination of priorities for attention, lean in the use of resources, targeted in practice, and cost-effective in results and outcomes, qualitatively assessed as these may have to be.

**Counseling Under Fire from the Critics**

When Brick (cited in Cohen and Brawer, 1982, p. 174) reviewed the 1972 book, edited by O'Banion and Thurston, *Student Development Programs in the Community Junior College,* he expressed surprise that none of the contributors, including both of this volume's coeditors, had questioned the existence of the various student personnel servies. In effect, the contributors had not been properly critical, Brick said; they had not listened carefully enough to the voices of criticism. Writing, to be sure, with the benefit of a few more years into the 1970s than when most of the O'Banion and Thurston book was prepared, Brick was prescient in warning of the changes that financially troubled times ahead could bring, including a surrender of certain community college functions. He pointed to the importance of using the critical judgments of others and the need to take account of critical social forces as a way of evaluating any and all of the college's functions.

The more narrow focus of this volume on counseling alone, rather than on all of student services, does shift somewhat the focus of that criticism. Nevertheless, useful (though often contradictory) critical contributions have been made regarding counseling, which community college personnel need to welcome and not ignore. Vaughan (1980) stresses the importance of being open to such criticism and not defensive, for if we were defensive, we would miss the value of the critical analysis he has urged us to use. We would also be missing opportunities for program improvement. The critics "offer new ways of looking at old problems and new ideas for exploration," he stated. "Community college leaders should examine the criticisms and determine which ones are valid in a given situation" (p. 13).

Various critics have pointed to problems in the provision of counseling services. Some counselors, they say, have helped cause these difficulties. While trying to help, they have hurt students unintentionally by building unhealthy dependence. There has been a concern for a long

time that some helpers end up doing more harm than good, that rather than contributing in an appropriate way to the solution of the student's problem, they may actually weaken or disable the student. Community college personnel have often heard the criticism that many college practices are really hand-holding ones, particularly in the case of the academically weak student. What is help, and at what point does it inhibit the gaining of self-sufficiency? Stensrud and Stensrud (1981) warned about fostering dependence and showed that inept counseling could violate human development principles. In making their point, they (or the editor) chose to give their article the provocative and perceptive title, "Counseling May Be Hazardous to Your Health; How We Teach People to Feel Powerless." Others have also warned against the many institutional factors that may induce learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975; Roueche, Mink, and Armes, 1981). Moore would strongly agree and in this volume (Chapter Three) calls for inculcating emotional and intellectual toughness. He denounces counselors and teachers of academically deficient students who contribute to the failure they are trying to eliminate by letting students play fast and loose with tough academic standards.

Counselors have also hurt students, it is charged, by joining in the "tracking" of them. This charge relates to the "cooling out" concept associated with such critics as Karabel (1972) and Zwerling (1976), based on the earlier scholarly analysis of Clark (1960). These critics point out that counselors look at what students can realistically accomplish in college and the work world, at least according to evidence they have at hand, the encourage students to lower their aspirations and settle for a program of studies leading to a lower-level job. In light of this criticism, counselors need to review their professional practice in a nondefensive way and take account of any subtle (or overt) manipulation they may be using or any lack of informed involvement with students in decisions that are made.

Some counselors have employed particular practices in ways that have reduced their effectiveness. According to some critics, counselors work in so many facets of student services that their counseling role is confusing and their impact is low. Gay, as cited by Cohen and Brawer, worries that counselors are providing useful student services, but there is a real question as to "whether or not some of the mundane tasks. . .are wise use of the skills and talents of counselors" (1982, p. 174). Since many community colleges utilize counselors in the varied way that has been described and not in the traditional counseling role, the criticism speaks to a broad issue. It often is true that a counselor's

effectiveness is weakened by being bogged down with distracting activities. If so, and if the situation can be remedied, the critic is to be thanked.

Often counselors have sought conscientiously to increase the number of students they serve by turning heavily to group work or to providing help through others. Critics such as Simon (1980) sharply question the minimizing of individual student contacts. At the City University of New York in the difficult years of the mid-1970s, Simon saw that one response to severe retrenchment moves was to increase the use of group programs, counselor consulting, technical aids, peer counseling, and other practices. The times were especially wrong for doing this, she pointed out, because there was an increase in the number of depressed, dropout-prone, suicidal students, confused over career and life dilemmas amidst a chaotic work world. Unfortunately these students found that sensitive trained counselors were no longer available to listen and to help. Younger teaching faculty members to whom they would naturally turn were also no longer available for a variety of reasons, and other avenues were foreclosed. Indeed, the Queens College president saw no way out except to close the student services department for the time being! Simon further reminds us that a carefully balanced program needs to be achieved when confronting major change in order to avoid the unhappy side effects of what might otherwise be a well-thought-out plan.

Some counselors, critics have charged, put the college's interest before that of the students. Counselors have acted primarily as institutional agents, implementing and justifying college policies and procedures without giving adequate attention to factors in the student's personal situation that call for institutional accommodation. Zwerling (1976) attacks the actions of counselors and other community college personnel who, by "tracking" students, act on behalf of the college against the best interests of students. From a different perspective, Gay feels that counselors profess to be interested in the whole student but then act as "housekeepers, guardians of the status quo," quieting the complainers and adjusting students to the system (cited in Cohen and Brawer, 1982, p. 173). The question is not resolved apparently: Should not the counselor's primary loyalty be to the college that pays his or her salary, rather than to the student? Although there is no easy answer to this question, the issue must not be resolved in such an anti-humanistic fashion.

Critics have identified several ways in which some counselors, as part of their work within the system, undercut their developmental

principles with poor institutional practices (a variation of the third criticism). They have articulated enthusiastically student development concepts but have actually done little in fostering programs to implement them. Various factors, of course, have led to this situation of big talk and little action. The lack of knowledge and experience in program development is one such factor. To Fenske (1980, p. 49), another difficulty is expecting that much will be done toward the "total development of students" while the faculty reward system remains "as invulnerable to change as it is without somehow reconstituting the entire structure and organization." It is probably for such a reason that the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education's summary report of 1973, prepared with the situations of all colleges and universities in mind, could not support a college mission that called for efforts toward the total development of students. As the members of the commission wrote: "'Totalism' in the campus approach to students is, we believe, neither wise nor possible" (p. 17). One can appreciate their hesitancy but must regret the distortion they brought to the debate by their emphasis on the unnerving concept of totalism. The intentional development of students can be somewhat less than the idea of total, and it can relate directly to humanistic criteria as to what the aims of a college should be.

According to Shaffer (1980), in words that would apply not only to Indiana University but also to community colleges all over the country, there are innumerable ways in which those concerned with student development change have ignored or misunderstood the many institutional restraints. Unless these are seen and dealt with constructively, there can be no significant implementation of student development ideas. Several years earlier, Brown (1972) criticized the student personnel worker/counselor who attempted to "go it alone." He asked, "Can student development really be fostered effectively without the support and influence of the academic dimensions of college life?" (Brown, 1972, p. 8). This question followed his concern that student personnel workers felt that student development was their "turf." Brown then asked whether others on campus were not equally concerned. The answer was obvious but reflected poor program development on the part of the counselors, poor understanding of the system, and poor relationships with teaching faculty colleagues.

Aside from such intrainstitutional difficulties counselors have faced, another criticism has been the inability or unwillingness of many counselors to see themselves as having to be accountable in the same way as others—weighed, that is, by the same measuring sticks. The problems faced by top administrative officials who bear responsibility

for budget and policy decisions of the whole college seem not to be appreciated. In a recent study of counseling practices in a large multi-unit community college system, it was pointed out that "there appears to be little if any feedback on counseling outcomes. These are, of course, primarily subjective and difficult to measure. Counselors generally feel they are impossible to deal with" (Thurston, 1981, p. 17). It is small wonder that there is little hard-line institutional support for counseling. Thurston, in Chapter Nine of this volume, has woven together Audrey Cohen's concept of empowerment with impact measurement. Thurston then calls for this kind of approach as a way to be accountable, rather than using such superficial quantitative data as simply the logging of student contacts. The critic serves the counseling program by insisting on the adoption of an accountability model using both quantitative and qualitative data. Furthermore, only by building college-wide respect based on such positive outcome data will community college counseling ever be able to become well-established.

**The Importance of Counseling**

It would be reassuring to think that a clear consensus may form once again within American higher education regarding the college's role in the development of students. In the community college, in a way that is different from that in the four-year liberal arts college or the university, a struggle continues over matters of meaning and purpose. Counselors should play a crucial role in thinking through this question. Many pragmatic forms of help to students in their life preparation are accepted as appropriate for a community college curriculum, such as occupational education, transfer courses, and basic skill improvement programs. Yet, these activities are in a sense aspects complementary to the main business of the college; they are means to an end rather than the end in itself. On the one hand, with some exceptions, they represent ways to enable the student to do something else, such as get a job, get into a department of studies, or even be able to become relatively self-sufficient. On the other hand, the college has long been called upon to be instrumental in students' total intellectual, moral, and emotional development. The fact that colleges have all too often abdicated their responsibility for this and have become merely assembly lines in the processing of credits and degrees, of the fact that academic departments have distorted the college's most significant work, is a matter for regret. The historic end, however, remains—to accomplish humane learning and growth in students (Chickering and Associates, 1981;

Dewey, 1916; Sanford, 1962). In the light of this tradition of higher education, it is unthinkable that any personnel in the community college—counselors, teachers, administrators, trustees—would accept the dehumanizing of its ideology and permit important developmental goals for students to be watered down. Those statements of ideals recorded in community college catalogs are heady stuff, stuff that evokes passion and commitment on the part of community college personnel. Nothing less should do than the intentional development of students. The forms of that development will vary according to the college's own design, what its faculty call for, its particular career requirements, its views of maturity to which different staff and faculty should contribute.

Thus, the counselor's role in helping students in their development is truly a crucial one for the 1980s, and it is consistent with the essential meaning of the American college at its best. In the last half century, through many historic changes, there have been challenges to the work of the counselor. The GIs who poured out of the separation centers after World War II, badly in need of help in coping with a changed post-war America, the veterans of the Korean War and Vietnam, the minority groups, women, older students, and handicapped who came to the community college in waves during the 1960s and 1970s—they found community college counselors seeking to meet their needs in different ways.

The hope and the challenge now is that, as the professional practice of community college counseling grows during the 1980s and 1990s, it will utilize more and more the new knowledge base of developmental theory. When a developmental perspective meshes with the eclectic activity of the community college counselor, then it is more likely that the college will cause intentional developmental change to occur in students.

Within the world of a community college that does take seriously its mission, the counselor's contribution can thus be an immense one. His or her values, training, expectations, and counseling strategies all suggest this. In a very special way that is different from that of all other disciplines and professional units within the college, those who represent the counseling function need to design their activities on the basis of guidelines from student development philosophy.

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*Deeply rooted in community college mission and philosophy, counseling is the most significant out-of-class service. Counselor roles, which have emerged out of secondary school and university practices, must be encouraged to grow in response to changing times.*

# *Primary Roles for Community College Counselors*

*Jane E. Matson*

Since early in the history of the two-year college in the United States, the definition of the major functions of the institution has included some reference to services for students over and beyond those traditionally provided in the classroom. When the early literature is examined, there is likely to be found in the description of a two-year college a reference to its responsibility to provide an opportunity for individuals to develop abilities to their maximum potential.

The basic philosophy of the two-year college is founded on the premise that the increasing democratization of access to postsecondary education will have a beneficial effect on individuals, as well as on society as a whole. The widespread and rapid growth of the two-year college is evidence that the general population accepted this basic concept and considered the institution a major means of upward socioeconomic mobility, a central theme of the "American Dream": that every citizen has a right to opportunity for self-improvement and that society has an obligation to provide such opportunity.

In describing the purposes of community junior colleges, major writers have almost without exception included counseling and guid-

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ance. Thornton (1966, p. 68) points out that the counseling function is especially important in view of the broad assortment of curricular offerings and the corresponding variety of students who seek the college's services. Medsker, in his landmark book, *The Junior College: Progress and Prospect,* points out that the comprehensive community college is: "one which (1) offers a variety of educational programs of an academic and an occupational nature, day and evening, for full-time and part-time students, (2) provides an opportunity for students to make up educational deficiences, (3) has a liberal admission policy, (4) emphasizes a well-developed guidance program, (5) performs a variety of special services to the community, and (6) insists on its rights to dignity on its own merits without attempting to resemble a four-year college" (1960, p. 203, underlining author's). Bogue, in describing the basic function of community colleges more than thirty years ago, cited the statement prepared by the California Association of Junior Colleges in 1948 which included *Orientation and Guidance* as one of six specific purposes or objectives. It is defined as "the specific responsibility of every junior college to assist its students to 'find themselves.' A program of training and guidance should be provided so that every student may discover his aptitudes, choose a life work, and prepare for the successful pursuit of such work" (Bogue, 1950, p. 53). Catalogs of the majority of two-year colleges, in describing the purposes of the institution, include some reference to guidance (or counseling) as a major responsibility. So there is substantial evidence that the role of counseling and guidance has been given at least lip service in the historical development of the two-year college.

It is interesting to note that as the two-year college evolved as a segment of postsecondary education, the secondary school itself played an important part in the development. The impetus for the establishment of a lower-division college came from chief administrators of several universities (see Medsker, 1960, p. 11), but the models used and the environment designed for them were similar to secondary schools, and in many cases the colleges were actually housed in existing high schools.

It is then not surprising to note that a significant part of the model for counseling in the two-year college is to be found in the work of the high school counselor. The other model, not only for the counseling function but for other student support services as well, was the traditional student personnel programs found in four-year colleges. As a result of this melding process, the support services programs found in most two-year colleges are an interesting hybrid of the programs com-

monly found in the American secondary school and in the American four-year college.

The counseling function, as it has been implemented in the majority of two-year colleges, is more closely related to the role of the high school counselor than to the counseling services in the senior colleges. This was particularly true in the 1950s and 1960s, when community colleges were being established at so rapid a rate that there was little time to design and develop a counseling model specifically adapted to the needs of the two-year colleges. The student populations during this period were more similar to the traditional college-going population than are the groups currently seeking educational assistance from the two-year college. Under these circumstances, the secondary school counseling model was not completely inappropriate, but under the present conditions it is not entirely adequate.

Counseling became the central focus of student support services, since it provided the pivotal point of contact with potential and actual students. As other student services were introduced, such as cocurricular activities, financial aid, and testing, the staff members to provide these services were frequently either personnel transferred from the counseling area or newly hired persons who had professional training as counselors. But whatever the reasons, the counseling service was and still is considered to be most significant of all the out-of-classroom services provided for students. It is usually the counselor that the student sees as the decision-making process is explored prior to and after enrollment in the college.

The responsibilities of the counselors employed in secondary schools have been historically related to the goals and purposes of the institutions. In the case of the secondary school, while these goals and purposes have been modified over time and have experienced an evolutionary process, the basic purpose of the institution has remained relatively constant. This is not so with the two-year college, which began as a vehicle to continue and expand the function of the secondary school. Its mission has undergone expansion and almost radical modification. The dynamic, ever-changing qualities of the two-year college have contributed to a long-term concern with the definition of the counselor's role. The delineation of the counselor's purposes and responsibilities has been a task that has challenged the two-year college counselor during the entire history of the institution. And the challenge has not yet been met, in part because the mission of the college is still in a state of flux. Nor is the counseling service provided by four-year colleges appropriate as a guideline for the community college counseling function.

**Role Definition**

A number of approaches might be taken in defining the counselor's role in the community college. While each of them focuses on different dimensions of the counselor's role, together they constitute a multi-faceted, many-dimensional conceptualization of the counseling function. It should be noted that efforts to describe the role of the counselor in terms of tasks performed at any given moment or in a restricted geographical setting are too limiting to be of real value. As a college shifts its focus and its composition, the role of those responsible for the counseling function must shift or demonstrate sufficient flexibility to accommodate the changes in the institution. Because the setting and structure of each college are unique, definition of the counseling role must be conceptualized in terms that can encompass the needs of a variety of colleges but that can also provide guidelines applicable to specific institutions. The two selected approaches presented here are offered as examples of ways to conceptualize counseling roles in the two-year college. It is hoped that either could be broadly applicable.

***Operational Role Aspects.*** One approach to role definition focuses on the counselor as a member of the campus community in terms of the responsibilities assumed in the day-to-day operation of the college. Thus, the counselor is first an educator who is charged with the responsibility of transmitting knowledge and skill development to other members of the college community. The predominant group to benefit from implementation of this aspect of the counselor's role is intended to be the student population. Increasingly, in the last decade, the counselor has served as instructor for a broad variety of courses often designated as the affective curriculum. Typically included are decision making, career planning, values clarification, personal assessment, mid-life change and other such areas focusing on the process of human development. As the composition of student populations has shifted upward in age and expanded in such characteristics as cultural background and academic ability, the needs of students have changed.

As enrollment increased, the resources of staff and finances diminished so that courses involving group instruction were perceived by many administrators as enabling a small counseling staff to serve more effectively an increasing student population. The counselors often saw this trend as providing not only an opportunity to serve larger groups of students but also a means of gaining respectability in the eyes of the academic teaching faculty—who seemed not to completely understand the one-to-one counselor relationship or to see how that service

contributed significantly to furthering the goals and mission of the institution. (It should be noted that these courses differ from the group process work so prevalent a decade or so ago when the emphasis was on "sensitivity training.")

A problem related to this particular function is the question of the extent to which the counseling staff is qualified to carry out this responsibility. A program of staff development may be needed in order to enhance the effectiveness of the counseling staff as they assume this responsibility. The degree to which the counseling staff perceives this function as suitable and the extent to which they feel comfortable in it will determine to a considerable extent the success with which it is effected. In some colleges, this problem has been resolved by differentiation of the counselor role so that those members of the staff who are interested in and qualified for the educator role will carry the major responsibility for the design and implementation of the affective curriculum. This can free other staff members to assume responsibility for other roles of counselors.

A second important aspect of the counselor's role is that of consultant. This facet of the counselor's responsibilities is a relatively recent development in the two-year college. As the ratio of students to counselors increased rapidly, it became impossible to maintain the level of individualized services to students typical of the 1950s and 1960s. In an effort to fill the inevitable gap in these services, counselors began to serve as consultants to other members of the college community who were delivering services of various kinds to students. Included were faculty, administrators, governing boards, and members of the total community who were making important policy decisions as well as, in many situations, delivering services directly to students. The growing variety and range of student characteristics taxed the abilities of all members of the campus community to identify and meet the needs of students seeking assistance from the college. Because of their training and experience, counselors were often considered best qualified to assist in the assessment of need and in the design and implementation of educational experiences most likely to result in success for the maximum number of students in a diverse population. While it is recognized that many counselors had not been provided the opportunity to learn consulting skills in their professional preparation, they were probably better able than other members of the college staff to acquire these skills quickly. As increasing proportions of the student population evidenced learning disabilities, inadequate preparation for college-level academic work, and physical handicaps that could interfere with achieve-

ment, the need for appropriate consultative services became more acute.

A third facet of the operational role is that of milieu management. In many cases, this role has been assumed indirectly and consists of environmental manipulation in order to accommodate the special needs of the student population. One of the primary goals of the counseling process is to create a learning environment for the student that is most likely to result in maximum learning. It is obvious that if the student does not learn, the college has failed in its purpose. While it may not always be possible to create such an environment, due to factors not under the control of the college, there is an obligation to make a sincere and informed effort to design and implement an environment that will encourage each individual student to maximize learning.

The strategies that may be employed are many and varied. They include such areas as the establishment of college policy, curriculum design, and instructional strategies. Historically, the most commonly used intervention strategies in college-student personnel work have been directed toward the individual college student. They have been designed to modify or redirect behavior so that it is more compatible with the college environment, thereby eliminating or minimizing areas of potential stress and conflict. The concept of campus ecology essentially provides a broader range of intervention strategies by focusing attention on the environment as an area affecting the student. The emerging role of the management of campus ecology is described in Crookston's definition of milieu management:

> It is the systematic coordination and integration of the total campus environment—the organizations, the structures, the space, the functions, the people and the relationships of each to all others and to the whole—toward growth and development as a democratic community. In furtherance of human development theory the relationship of the whole milieu with all its parts, and vice versa, must be symbiotic, or mutually enhancing or growth producing. Thus as the individual and the group contribute to the total community, they give the community the capacity to create the conditions that contribute to the enhancement of the individual and the group (cited in Delworth and Hanson, 1980, p. 209).

The strategies used to effect milieu management are designed after consideration of the environment as represented in faculty atti-

tudes, the college's value orientation, and its major policies. If the campus environment is judged not to be conducive to desirable student growth and development, intervention strategies can be designed that are intended to bring about changes needed to improve the interaction between the student and the ecology of the campus. The focus is shifted from the individual student as an entity to the interaction between students and their environment and the resulting milieu. The goal is to make possible the maximum growth and development of all students.

This approach calls for new skills and knowledge on the part of student personnel specialists and especially of counselors, whose training for the most part has focused on the individual and the treatment of symptoms that are diagnosed as nonproductive. The emphasis has been on the adjustment of the individual in order to cope with problems rather than on the need for change within the institution. The role of milieu manager requires a different perspective. But, in spite of the problems that implementation of this function may bring, it seems to offer great promise for providing a key to the significant contribution the counselor may make to the achievement of the mission of the two-year college.

***Relationship Role Aspects.*** A second approach to a study of the counselor's role uses an analysis of the dimensions that involve significant others in the college. Four categories of functions or responsibilities involving linkages with other groups may be delineated: students, instructional staff, administrators, and members of the community.

In this context, the relationship of the counselor to students is a key dimension. Whatever the counselor does should be directly or indirectly related to the ultimate welfare of the student. Considered in its broadest terms, the counselor's function with reference to students may be stated as assistance with decision making. This may involve the gathering of factual evidence as well as evidence related to feelings, on the basis of which the student may decide a course of action. It may also involve precipitating or facilitating the review of decisions the student may have already made, when it appears that such review is advisable.

Another responsibility of the counselor toward students is interpreting the role and function of the two-year college. The counselor can be instrumental in increasing student understanding of the way in which the college can be expected to contribute (or not to contribute) to the achievement of students' personal goals and objectives, once they have been identified.

The nature of the relationship between the counselors and the teaching staff is not only a significant criterion in evaluating the coun-

seling program; it also has great significance in measuring the effectiveness of the college as a whole. For only if the counselors and the members of the teaching staff understand and accept their respective roles, assume equal responsibility for establishing and maintaining good lines of communication and, perhaps most crucial of all, see to it that the lines of communication are used to transmit, in all directions, meaningful information on which purposeful action can be based, will students be likely to receive what they are entitled to in the way of educational experiences. Important in this relationship are the mutual understanding by the counselor and by the instructor of the important role each has to play in the student's educational experiences and a willingness on the part of each to explore continuously new avenues and techniques for increasing the student's learning.

The counselor's relationship to the administrator is again one of mutual responsibility. While many areas may be involved in this relationship, the curriculum is certainly one of the most important. It is almost a truism that the curriculum of any given college exists for the purpose of meeting the needs of the community it serves. Yet it is common for decisions regarding curriculum to be made without consideration of the needs of the actual or potential students or with consideration only of what are assumed to be their needs with little attention given to the availability of data to support the assumptions. The counselor plays an important part in determining the needs of students through the identification of pertinent data regarding student characteristics, both intellective and nonintellective; through the interpretation of these characteristics in terms of curricular needs; and through whatever assistance can be given to the development of a total curriculum that will meet the needs of the students within the boundaries of the objectives of the college.

Another facet of this relationship is the responsibility of the counselor to participate in the evaluation of the counseling program. If the provision of counseling services for the purpose of assisting students in self-evaluation, planning, and attainment of their maximum potential is accepted as one of the major purposes of the two-year college, it becomes essential that continual measure be taken of how well that particular objective is being accomplished. This is an obligation not only to the students but also to those who are providing the financial support for the counseling services.

The counselor's relationship to the total community is, to some extent, similar to that of any other member of the college staff. All those affiliated with the college have a responsibility to the community it

serves. But the counselor may have more frequent and extensive opportunities to implement this facet of the role. In the development of suitable and effective articulation policies and practices, the counselor has an excellent avenue for interpretation of the college to other segments in the educational system. In working closely with the secondary schools from which many college students come, as well as with those educational and/or training institutions to which college students may go, the counselor has an especially important opportunity to help communicate the basic philosophy of the two-year college, as well as to interpret the precise nature of its program. Other means by which this particular role of the counselor may be implemented are participation in all kinds of community service and outreach activities, establishment of working relationships with social agencies whose work is related to any aspect of the community college, and a constant assessment of community resources and needs that may be useful in moving the college toward the realization of its specific objectives.

***Traditional Role Definition.*** It may be noted that the more traditional definition of the counselor's role is not emphasized here. This has usually involved an enumeration of various tasks counselors are customarily called upon to perform or to be involved with to some degree. These might include such tasks as educational advisement, career counseling, crisis intervention, student assessment, group counseling, and orientation. It is impractical to try to list all the possible tasks for which counselors may be asked to assume responsibility, as there is a wide variation of the specifics from college to college. Such a "laundry list" may be used to limit the expectations on the part of the college community of what counselors can or should do. In recent years, paraprofessionals have been performing many of these tasks with proficiency and effectiveness in colleges across the country. This should not necessarily be interpreted as a diminution in the role of the counselor but rather as a freeing of time and resources to perform other tasks requiring the level of expertise which is assumed for professionally trained counselors. It is likely that most of the tasks traditionally enumerated will be included in the implementation of the counselor role prescribed above. But the dynamic nature of the community college makes it essential that the roles of the counselor be conceptualized in such a way that, as the mission of the college is redefined and restructured to meet the needs of its constituents, the counselors can work within a flexible framework to identify appropriate tasks. There is some question whether the laundry-list approach would provide such freedom.

## Summary

It should be emphasized that the role of the counselor as defined here is highly professionalized and calls for a broad level of professional activity. It demands the identity of the counselor as a person well qualified by training and experience to execute the varied facets of the role in a skillful, competent manner. If the community college counselor is to make the contribution that should be demanded of him or her to the implementation of the two-year college philosophy, the role must be broadly perceived by those with whom the counselors share responsibility: the students, the teaching faculty, the administrators, and the members of the community. Even more essential, and perhaps the factor that will determine the eventual success or failure of the counseling function, is that counselors must see themselves as true professionals whose horizons and understandings reach far beyond the confines of the local campus to the broader community of fellow professionals. They must be willing and competent to assume the duties and responsibilities that are inherent in the prescribed role.

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*Special services should serve as catalysts, not crutches, helping students become intellectually and emotionally tough.*

# *Special Roles with Special Students*

*William Moore, Jr.*

To label any student *special* is somehow inconsistent with the fundamental ethos of the two-year college and makes the work of the counselor unnecessarily difficult. These institutions have been working with atypical students in sufficiently large numbers and for such a long time that those who might have been special at one time are no longer exceptional. What makes special students special? For almost two decades, authors have referred to certain two-year college students as "new," "nontraditional," "high-risk," "culturally disadvantaged," and "remedial." All of these labels implied that the students were different from other students. And in terms of the characteristics traditionally used to identify college students, they were atypical. Essentially, they were students who were described as older, academically deficient, from low socioeconomic backgrounds, with poor high school records and standardized test scores, and who represent a disproportionately high number of minority students (Cross, 1971; Jencks and Riesman, 1968; Moore, 1970; Roueche, 1973). Added to this group are veterans and an influx of foreign students. The characteristics cited as descriptors of special are of such long standing and are representative of such a large

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number of students that identifying them as unique can be challenged. More specifically, are such students really special?

**Special Student Categories**

If variables such as age, deficiency in the basic academic skills, membership in a minority group, low socioeconomic background, and unimpressive test scores are examined, "special" becomes more normative than atypical. A brief look at the variables identified may serve to demonstrate this position.

The average age of college-going students continues to increase. A decade ago more than 60 percent of the students graduating from high school went directly to college. By the middle of the decade, only half of the high school graduates who went to college entered immediately after graduation (Henderson and Plummer, 1978, p. 25). Moreover, because there are so many students now attending college part-time (Frankel, 1978), the age of college-going students has increased and will continue to increase. The average age of students attending two-year colleges was twenty-seven years in 1980 and has been increasing for almost two decades (American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1982). On the basis of age, then, most of the students in colleges are not special (Cross, 1981; Gleazer, 1973). This change in the college-going population is no longer viewed as an immense problem but as a significant opportunity for academic institutions. Just as age no longer designates specialty, neither does deficiency in basic academic skills.

***Students Deficient in Academic Skills.*** According to the U.S. Office of Education, less than half of the adults in America read at or above the level of junior high school (Hechinger, 1977). The necessity of providing some remediation of the basic academic skills to the college-going population among these adults is not a recent discovery; in fact, "the need to help college students overcome deficiencies in basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics has been recognized since the late 1800s" (Baker and Reed, 1980-1981, p. 36).

Those responsible for implementing the "open door" philosophy of the community college have encouraged—indeed, invited and recruited—students to the institution who were known to have or were suspected of having deficiencies in basic academic skills. By increasing enrollment, including the enrollment of academically deficient students, colleges simultaneously increased their level of financial support. For many public institutions, the activities were initiated to comply

with judicial decisions and federal mandates to provide equal educational opportunity for some higher education. McCabe admits, "We developed practices to help people gain access to higher education who might have been excluded otherwise" (as quoted in Dubocq, 1981, p. 27). These practices, spawned for the right reasons, attracted an unusual clientele.

The worst high school performers, four-year college rejects, students from some of the poorest schools, veterans enrolled in college on GI benefits, other students attending for financial gains, and students who were formerly successful in school but who had not attended since their graduation from high school, all enter the open door of the community college. The overwhelming majority are deficient in the basic academic skills, much less the advanced and complex skills necessary to handle the cognitive abstractions that characterize college intellectual activity.

Colleges have been actively working with academically deficient students for almost a century. Some of them have had outstanding success with such students, notably the historically black colleges (Le Melle and Le Melle, 1969; Moore and Wagstaff, 1974). With such a long history of colleges working with students who were deficient in these skills, it would seem that such students would now be commonplace in two-year colleges, rather than special. This is also true of minority students.

***Minority Students.*** "Nationwide, minority group students constitute approximately one-fourth of all community college enrollments" (Cohen and Brawer, 1982, p. 42). Forty percent of the ethnic minorities attending college attend community colleges; the overwhelming majority are black (Cohen and Brawer, 1982, p. 41). Colleges actively recruit minorities (Cohen and Brawer, 1982; Cross, 1971; Morrison and Ferrante, 1973). Black students have attended community colleges for almost a quarter of a century, in greater numbers than in any other type of postsecondary institution. Often they are identified as special. Are they special because they are representative of a minority group, or are they special because a disproportionately larger number of those who attend two-year colleges than other types of colleges are not adequately prepared academically? Some minority group students do want to be treated as being special; that is, they want to receive special treatment. This can only happen when those who have some responsibility for the student are irresponsible.

While many minority students manifest all the social pathologies previously described, they require the same services as do students

with similar problems who are not members of a minority group, and thus they are more like other students than they are different. It would be less than candid to suggest, however, that race is not, indeed, a significant factor. Race is like a great tattoo on the American psyche. It emerges with the consistency of sunrise and it affects those inside academe as well as those outside of it. Still, the visible presence of minorities on many campuses is common, and the identification of some of their social and academic problems, some of them manifest, is also common knowledge.

***Veterans.*** Veterans are certainly not a new group in colleges. In fact, it was their enrollment in large numbers in colleges and universities after their return from World War II and the Korean War that precipitated much of the college building boom that followed those two conflicts. Colleges have really had more than three decades of experience in working with veterans. Veterans also have been receiving special attention from the federal government for these three decades through special benefits from the GI Bill and from the Veterans Administration as a resource organization.

***Foreign Students: War and Political Refugees.*** War and political refugees might make up the only group of students that can really be designated as special. Community colleges have had less than a decade of experience in working with most of them. Cuban and Hungarian political refugees have been assimilated with greater success and efficiency than have the war and political refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia. Facility with the language appears to be the major problem, a problem that makes them special.

***Students from Low Socioeconomic Conditions.*** The low socioeconomic condition of many students has also been cited as a variable contributing to their specialness. It can be argued that, for a variety of reasons, this variable is questionable as a criterion of specialness. The community college is said to have been designed for hardship cases in the first place (Gleazer, 1973, p. 6). The institution attracts a large number of students who represent the first generation in their families to receive postsecondary education; thus it is not surprising that these students have come from lower-class families with average or below-average financial means. Any institution charging low tuition and having an open-door admissions policy can expect much of its clientele to come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Students who support themselves while attending school and/or those who must secure some type of welfare assistance are usually representative of low socioeconomic communities: rural areas, urban-based housing projects, barrios, and

Appalachia, all of which are representative of low socioeconomic locations. The community college has an image closely associated with vocational education, so it is perceived as a college serving the student from "blue collar" families. Financial aid is required by up to 90 percent of the students from some groups. Perhaps what is at the core of targeting students from low socioeconomic environments as special is that students from these types of communities must simultaneously accommodate multiple problems that seem intractable. Under such conditions, students do not function optimally (Williams, 1969).

***Past Performances.*** The past academic performances of many students at the time of their initial enrollment in a community college is significantly poorer than that of students who go directly from high school to a senior college. Monroe (1972) emphasizes that community college students are "less intelligent and self-motivated than senior college students" (p. 99). Cross (1971) found that the majority of students matriculating to the community college come from the lower half of their high school class (p. 7). Trent and Medsker (1968) reported that underprivileged persons are less proficient in academic skills (pp. 57–58). All available studies confirm that there is a high incidence of students coming to the community college with past records of poor academic performance; the number represents more than half of the enrollment.

As we have seen, the "special" students frequently alluded to in the literature are really those who make up the normal enrollment. Why not, therefore, go on about the business of teaching the students with full support from the counselor? This was precisely what the historically black colleges did. Such a course of action might very well be why they were so successful in reaching their students, the overwhelming majority of whom could be described as nontraditional. What is even more significant about those colleges is that they had few of the resources available to community college professionals today. While those colleges did have many recognized faults, they were not distracted from their mission because of the academic preparation and the social conditions of their students.

It seems that spending an inordinate amount of time linking academic skill deficiencies in adults to self-worth, cultural factors, race, economics, family dysfunction and disorganization, and past performance has not proved to be a useful exercise in terms of information that will help professional counselors and teachers improve the teaching and learning process. It appears that this information is used more to predict failure. There are many examples in which such a variable did

not have a demonstrated effect on the ability of students to achieve. The lives of many prominent personalities (Thomas A. Edison, Woodrow Wilson, Albert Einstein, Auguste Rodin, and George Washington Carver are examples) show that predicting failure (or success) on the basis of earlier life experiences, race, and socioeconomic factors should be done with extreme caution (Patten, 1973, Thompson, 1971).

The author's acquaintance with five other persons of much less prominence further demonstrates the folly of negative predictions based on the criteria cited. These five persons fit *all* of the conditions mentioned. Warren and Marilyn are physicians, Robert is a dentist, Susan is a lawyer, and William, a former college president, is a full professor at a major university. All of these persons came from the same midwestern city and the same general area of that city. They were evaluated as academically poor risks before, and for some time after, their admission to college. Warren, Susan, and Robert were diagnosed as "slow learners" and were required to take remedial courses to repair their deficiencies. Marilyn was at the eighth percentile on a national examination, and William, who was perceived as being both culturally and educationally disadvantaged, had reading scores that placed him at the sixth-grade level when he applied to college. On the jacket flap of one of his books he wrote: "I was a high-risk student. According to all of the evaluative predictors I should never have gotten a college education. My aunt once told me that I would never finish high school; the high school counselor said I probably would not get to college; the college adviser said that I was not master's degree material; and my friends told me the Ph.D. was out of the question. Fortunately, I did not know it" (Moore, 1970).

All of the successful people noted here were informed by college teachers, counselors, and admissions officers when they applied for admission that they were not college material. Each of them either found better advice or had the good sense to disregard their evaluations. They represent that group of people whom Watson (1974) describes as achieving in spite of the system. The siblings of four of these persons form a collective which includes two criminals, a garbage collector, a post office worker, a hod carrier, a drug addict, two public school teachers, a house painter, and a waiter. Ironically, the children from this collective all attended college, except those of the two teachers. What is even more ironic is that the post office worker and one of the felons had the best academic records and the highest standardized test scores among the group. One must conclude that human beings are difficult to predict.

High or low Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores are not always linked to academic performance (Boyd, 1973, p. 49). While all of the data are not in, one can speak with almost any randomly chosen graduate student from a minority group and discover that the quality of the student's work and the progress of his or her graduate program greatly exceeded the performance indicated by test scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Boyd has predicted that this phenomenon of minority students achieving beyond what standard test scores predict will continue.

The cases provided suggest that making predictions about human beings places one on tenuous ground. What about the services provided to the students? Do they really help or hinder the student?

**Special Services: Catalyst or Crutch?**

For some time, much of the thrust for working with the students in community colleges has been on combining humaneness with academic activity. The rationale has been that if some of the social, psychological, and economic problems of the students could be understood, worked on, and solved, then the students would become motivated to learn. More and more services have been made available to the students. Everything from marriage counseling to remedial reading has been provided. The question is, how effective have these services been? Many of these services appear to do more to make students dependent than to motivate them to handle their academic work.

Since the end of World War II, the number and variety of services provided to students have mushroomed. More than two decades ago, the American Council on Education's Committee on the Administration of Student Personnel Work listed twenty-three services either provided by or needed by institutions (Feder and others, 1958, p. 16). Since that time, many others have been added. By the mid-sixties, however, Sanford (1962, 1966, 1967), among others, was proposing that the student service thrust be changed to student development; that is, concentrating on the whole student. This approach came to be known as the human development, holistic development, and organistic approach. The social and behavioral scientists began to get into the fertile field of what had originally been solely a service function of student personnel (Saddlemire, 1980, p. 29). Student services got involved with such things as trying to shape students' attitudes, interests, and activities. Such ideas as self-concept, value clarification, self-actualization, and cognitive mapping became the party line for dealing

with many of the students. A whole conceptualization was built on body language.

One of the major weaknesses in the developmental approach and its use by the counselor is the source of the theories used to support it: namely, theories advanced by the social and behavioral scientists. While the various theories—psychological, cognitive, maturity models, person-environment interaction models, and so forth—provide considerable explanation of why the so-called nontraditional students fail, they do not provide explanations of why some of those same students succeed. Most of the theories and elaborate models we have are silent on this point. Perhaps if we could explain why those "high-risk, culturally different" students do succeed academically, we would have the key to securing a larger number of them.

While the social and behavioral sciences have made and continue to make significant contributions to human endeavor, it is important to call attention to some of the problems in predicting human behavior. There is neither an intent nor a desire here to denigrate the social and behavioral sciences. What is being emphasized is that their explanations and prescriptions with regard to working with many college students are found wanting. While their theoretical designs, statistical procedures, and underlying theses may appear to be sound from an abstract point of view, in practical application they are, or may be, misapplied and misunderstood. They are certainly misused. While an explanation may facilitate a cure, it can be made to seem exculpatory, diluting to the point of disappearance the idea of responsibility (Will, 1982). We should not provide so many services and exoneration excuses that a student uses these resources and excuses more as a crutch to escape responsibility than as a catalyst for growth. No organization (college) and its agents (counselors, teachers, administrators, and so on) can care enough to provide all of the loving, caring, understanding and the other affective dimensions that students may need. Nor can it provide all of the services to offset even most of the socioeconomic conditions experienced by many of the students. The question then is, what role(s) can institutions play in providing services for their students?

**Assisting Students: Roles and Responsibilities**

In reviewing the literature in search of useful information that will help determine what role(s) the institution and its actors can play in providing services for students, one soon gets a feeling of deja vu. Academic people want still more administrative support, better students,

more hardware, fewer students to teach, more tutorial services, and so on. Professionals in the support roles, such as counselors, want to provide more personal and intervention services. Counselors, in addition, emphasize human development almost at the expense of educational development, although the two types of development are inextricably tied one to the other and are not mutually exclusive. Often it appears, however, that counselors are more concerned with what makes the student tick with regard to his or her psychological development than with academic development. This is not to say that practitioners spend most of their time in this way. Given a choice, however, one suspects that these professionals would give more time to psychological development than to much of the routine, referral, academic advising, and other such functions that might be carried on by persons with much less training.

***Emphasizing Academic Education.*** The first responsibility of the institution in providing special services to students, to which counselors should contribute, is to establish academic education as the central focus of the institution. When the word *academic* is used here, it is inclusive of technical, vocational, and other forms of education, all of which require basic academic skills. While the institution may carry on other functions, students come to college to acquire skills that will allow them to accommodate the needs of society. Thus, in their efforts to provide such skills training, the institution and its agents should assist the students in becoming intellectually and emotionally tough.

The first step in becoming intellectually tough is to develop skills that are the foundations for success. No student can develop intellectual toughness if he or she fails to master the basic academic skills. Intellectual toughness is taught; it does not just happen. It is taught by setting standards for the students, being consistent in their application, and not accepting excuses when students attempt to modify those standards. The student who is to be helped must be informed in direct terms that there is no shortcut to excellence, that learning requires time, commitment, and self-discipline.

Students learn to become intellectually tough when they are advised and taught to question the professor until the concept to be learned is understood and until they verify information, ideas, and processes independent of the professor. To teach intellectual toughness is to teach the skills that will make the student academically persistent. This means that the student learns to endure the inconvenience and time consumption of preparation, the monotony of practice, and the frustration and exhaustion that come from making mistakes. Intellectually tough students are not satisfied with themselves until they know

that a task has been accomplished in such a way as to meet their high standards.

Intellectual toughness has nothing to do with economics, race, sex, or other such variables so easily refuted. It is concerned with attitude, training, and discipline, dimensions that can be influenced by counselors, teachers, and other educators. This means that the professionals must be tough enough to insist that students do those things that are in their own interests.

Helping a student become emotionally tough is a difficult task, because it requires making students aware that while they can expect to experience alienation, unfairness, disinterest, sexism, racism, and isolation in the college community, they cannot become dysfunctional. More specifically, the student must be helped to realize that everyone in the academic community, as is true elsewhere in society, is not a shining example of civic virtue. Students can expect to encounter much that is good and bad about human nature. Perhaps they will recognize that their interests, goals, and problems are not always a primary or even a secondary concern of many professionals with whom they will have contact. People in the academic community, as in the general society, are respectful of fighters and are quickly bored with whiners and complainers. That is what human nature and reality are all about; the student who recognizes that he or she must prevail in spite of these conditions learns to develop the emotional antibiotics to handle the situation. The student who learns not to seek emotional free rides is the one who faces reality and, ultimately, the one who becomes emotionally tough—that is, self-sufficient, independent, and disciplined.

***Facilitating Academic Success.*** A second responsibility of the institution in providing services to students is to help all students achieve academic success. To do this, the college must (1) identify problems associated with the success or lack of success of the students; (2) isolate those elements that contribute to the problems; and (3) apply remedies as appropriate. Community colleges have already identified the two most compelling problems among students with academic skill deficiencies: their high rate of academic failure and attrition. These two dimensions have been concerns of sustained focus. Attempts to remedy the deficiencies and reverse the rate of attrition have been among the most protracted, complicated, frustrating, and costly objectives colleges have pursued, although the pursuit of those objectives has not found complete support in the college community. Still, the problems associated with these students are problems that educators have not mastered and cannot dismiss. When community college educators are asked

about their inability to find solutions to the problems, they are sometimes either understandably defensive or prudently silent. They recognize, as do others, that what can be done to help their students learn is not necessarily done and that what is done depends on human choices made in constantly shifting circumstances.

Lack of institutional support, the students themselves, and other variables are used as mirrors for reflecting the learning difficulties and high attrition of the students. Yet some of the procedures of academic people are a part of the problem. The practices of many of those who provide counseling and instruction to students with academic deficiencies may influence, if not program, those students for failure. This thesis does not suggest that educators who work with poor achievers consciously conspire to promote their failure. It does suggest, however, that because of their philosophies, the confusion of genuine humaneness with sound judgment, misguided beliefs about what will motivate students and faulty hypotheses, those who are charged with assisting students to remediate their academic deficiencies contribute through their beliefs and practices to the very failure they are trying to eliminate.

What are some of these practices? Many are related to what counselors and teachers believe or hope will motivate students to achieve. One example is the educationally and psychologically unsound practice of giving the rewards of academic success to those who have not achieved that success. The awarding of unearned grades is a case in point.

It is not difficult to find sympathy grades awarded to high-risk students—that is, grades awarded not because the student has carried out the assignment but because of his or her known litany of environmental and personal problems; the instructor in such a case feels that the unearned sympathy grades will somehow minimize the problems or, at least, not add to them. Such grades, however, do not eliminate the problems and can have negative effects on both those who have earned their grades and those who have not. It is not helpful to attempt to ameliorate one problem while initiating others.

Another ill-advised grading practice is the awarding of grades for effort—that is, for trying hard. Trying hard is commendable, but it is not the same as achievement; nor is it a reason for awarding grades. Trying hard is expected, and it is often a prerequisite to mastery of a subject or exercise. It is a student's responsibility to try hard, and while effort deserves recognition, it is misleading to equate it with accomplishment. An even more dubious use of grade rewards is to give them for attendance. Attendance, like trying, is expected. It is in the student's own interest to be there.

Neither rational analysis nor available empirical evidence supports the activities cited. Moreover, such practices show limited vision. And they are not in the best interest of the student who later enrolls in courses that are more rigorous and nonremedial—courses in which the standards for achievement and the grading practices of the professor are less accommodating. The chances for success in such courses are seriously diminished if students have become used to receiving unearned grades.

Some counselors and teachers will accept street language as academically defensible when it is not. Certainly such language is worthy of study, and it is useful in communicating in certain environments and even essential in understanding certain literature. It is creative, has color, and contains all of the ingredients for conveying the full range of human interaction. However, it is not the language to use in academic remediation, nor is it the language used in the mainstream of society. In like manner, street language cannot be found in textbooks as an example of correct spoken English. Nor can it be found on the SAT or the American College Test—the very instruments used to evaluate the academic proficiency of students coming to the colleges and as criteria for their placement. No single activity more clearly programs the student for academic failure.

What is being emphasized here is the importance of standards. A more convincing cause can be made for the development and maintenance of standards than can be made for a lack of them and a disregard for them once they are established. The watering down of standards that are already watered down makes no sense at all. By their very nature, remedial courses are at a level below that at which a student should be performing. The use of such courses is necessary and defensible. However, it is not defensible to further lower the level or rigor of such courses if the standards for them were appropriately established.

Too often one gets the impression from the phrase *individualized instruction* that individualized standards are implied. One recognizes that individual differences exist with regard to ability, performance, pace, need, motivation, and so on. These characteristics have more to do with process and style than with standards. Standards ought to remain stable, regardless of process and style. If standards are so flexible as to be changed with every new demand or problem, then they are uesless, and they will not provide us with any defensible way to describe what is required of our institution or to report what changes have taken place in the students. In short, standards are a benchmark for sound

academic development, and they need to be applied to many common practices that contribute to student failure.

***Evaluating Student Services.*** A third important responsibility in serving community college students is determining whether the services provided students actually do what they are supposed to do. Quintillan (1982), in a follow-up study of minority graduates, found that the factors that had influenced them to persist in the Allied Health program at Sinclair Community College were peer support, flexible scheduling, the supportiveness of the clinical staff, and their own motivation. Financial aid, personal counseling, tutorial services, academic advising, and other such services identified by the graduates were considered only minimally influential. Other elements identified as highly influential were their economic conditions, dissatisfaction with previous employment, and the fact that the time spent in the program "had to end at some time." What is emphasized here is good guidance. It is assumed that the appropriate academic support (tutorial service, developmental courses, language instruction for foreign students, and so on) will be made available. What does not seem to be at the disposal of many of the students is a good education. The student has a responsibility to pursue that education, and the institution plays a part in seeing that he or she does just that.

***The Counselor as Student Advocate.*** An important role that counselors play in assisting special students is that of student advocates. Advocates are those who not only plead in favor of, speak for, and support the students, but also solicit and promote their positive qualities. The lack of evidence of such advocacy would suggest that the positive qualities of special students have not been a research priority. In fact, the literature is silent on the positive characteristics of such students. Not even the proclaimed advocates of special students take any special steps to disprove any of the negative characteristics reported about them or to identify any positive ones. On the contrary, one is likely to find that the advocates do as much as any other group to confirm the widely held image of special students. The characteristics attributed to special students are not solely distinctive to them; they are descriptive of other students as well (for example, the desire for instant gratification or the possession of poor self-concepts). Yet, advocates cannot isolate positive attributes of special students, especially those who are academically deficient.

A case in point occurred during my participation in the summer of 1982 in a highly publicized, nationally known institute. Many of the forty-plus persons who were members of the institute were from com-

munity colleges. During one presentation concerned with developmental students, the members of the institute were asked by the presenter to identify three positive academic attributes of developmental students and three positive emotional attributes related to them. Not a single participant could fulfill this assignment. Even more significant, the group could not collectively satisfy this request. Everything these professionals had learned—and were learning—about developmental students concentrated on the students' negative social, academic, and psychological deficiencies. At the conclusion of the session, several members of the group noted that nothing in their professional training or in their expectations had led them to question the assumptions of the experts or the literature. They had never been challenged to see another point of view and had never generated hypotheses of their own. Yet, questioning unsubstantiated assumptions and challenging the conventional wisdom is what advocacy is all about.

***Encouraging Academic Effort.*** Counselors need to help special students understand that academic success is their most important business in college. Indeed, it may be crucial to their social and economic futures. Special students, in particular, must be aware that they cannot simply fit going to school into their schedules. While the students may be attending college part-time, academic success requires full-time attention to the enterprise. It requires doing what is required, taking the time that is needed, and making choices. The inescapable fact, however, is that other things do compete with the business of going to school, including home, family, and employment for many of the students.

It is well documented that the majority of community college students are employed either full-time or part-time. Some of them hold jobs and are nonetheless academically successful. But the romanticized idea of the student working hard all day or night and then going to school and achieving academic success has been oversold. It takes an unusual student to succeed under such conditions. It suffices to say that giving work and school equal priority offers a poor prognosis for real academic success.

*Real academic success* is a key phrase. Special students need to understand, for example, that significant progress may still represent only limited growth. While raising one's reading level, for example, from the fourth grade to the eighth grade is to be commended, the accomplishment may not be worth very much in the context of the minimum skills required to succeed in college. The increase in reading skill will really pay off for the student in college when he or she can use it to

unlock the theories, principles, processes, and other complexities and appreciations recorded in print.

Raising the reading, writing, and mathematics levels to less than eleventh or twelfth grade may not prepare the student for any of the technological programs in the college—open-door policy notwithstanding. Nor will a command of the basic academic skills at a level less than high school have much positive impact on other forms of academic achievement in college. Successful remediation only corrects past learning faults and omissions and only qualifies the student to compete with other students who have histories of academic success. It follows, then, that special students and those who counsel them must know that their chances for academic success are more improbable than are those of some other students; however, they must also know that an improbability is not an impossibility.

***Choosing and Using Appropriate Human Resources.*** The counselor can play a significant role in assisting students in identifying and making use of their most important resource—the teacher. The teacher is central to the learning process in the college setting—not programmed texts, computers, learning laboratories, and other such resources that require self-instruction. While these technologies augment the instruction process, they cannot motivate like the teacher, sense the particular moment that a student is about to grasp an idea and aid him or her, have a conference with the student, determine just where the student is having trouble, or watch the interaction between and among students. Not even the counselor is that central to the learning process.

The counselor can help the student select the better teachers. While this is often viewed as a highly sensitive act, it is important advice. Most counselors and faculty members know who the better teachers are, although they are not likely to identify them for students. There is also a tendency to support one's professional colleagues even when they are not considered to be competent. However, just as one would not refer a friend or an associate to a doctor reputed to be incompetent, the same care might be exercised with the student. History has shown that counselors and other educational professionals are not likely to do very much to change or help their colleagues improve their performance; they can, however, direct students to teachers who will provide them with the best opportunity for an education. The emphasis here is on placing the students with tough teachers who are competent, available, and committed to students and to education. The counselor who uses this approach need not condemn the weak and uncommitted

instructor; he or she need only recommend the teacher considered to be the more desirable.

This proposal would constitute a question of ethics for some. It could be argued that the proposal shows disloyalty to one's colleagues. Yet it is fair to ask to whom a teacher owes the greater loyalty—to professional associates, or to students. Answering this question and choosing techniques such as have been suggested create dilemmas—conditions educators attempt to avoid by developing some type of working strategy rather than solving the problem. This type of strategy provides only temporary relief; the problem will re-emerge at a different time.

The problems involved with assisting special students are not easy, and there are no panaceas. Special students require special people playing unique roles. The reason we turn to people is that they represent the most important resource. It is very important, therefore, that people in helping roles be clear about the parts they play, what they are trying to do, their assumptions, their limitations, and their awareness of the prophecies that they can consciously and unconsciously fulfill. Intervention is always suspect. This is because interventionists are always suspect.

Counselors and other persons involved in intervention activity presume to effect change in people or to help people effect change in themselves. Because the changes sought after are often psychological and sometimes run counter to the previous training, environment, and beliefs of the people involved, effecting change in them is made more difficult. The difficulty is compounded because the interventionists themselves are not immune to stereotyping those they expect to help and because they, like others, accommodate the conventional wisdom without challenging it. One of the major confusions for some instructional personnel and many special students about counseling interventionists is that the interventionists seem to have trouble clarifying what they are doing and what they intend to accomplish. Clarity of the role would seem to be a benchmark of the interventionist.

It is necessary to turn to people for other reasons. Any thoughtful analysis of past efforts to assist special students will show that making more money available to educate them has not achieved the desired goal. For the most part, financial resources have only provided for additional hardware, materials, space, and activities presumed to enhance the academic chances of the students. Those resources have not been used to provide a fundamental rethinking of what helping special students means and what it requires of an institution and its personnel. No one has suggested a search for answers to questions through

disciplined inquiry as a way to approach the complex problem. No one has challenged whether the installation of a learning laboratory replete with electronic gadgetry and programmed textbooks is a good idea or the answer. The number of such laboratories seems to reflect more of a collective edifice complex of community college people than sound educational thinking and planning to provide academic assistance to a significant segment of the college population.

**Past Problems and Future Directions**

In the past, few have suggested that good guidance and sound instruction were preferable to talk cures related to personal problems and to gadgets designed to free the teacher from what he or she is there to do in the first place. Past experience has also shown that community college personnel themselves, both administrators and faculty members, allowed—indeed, helped—assistance to special students to become politicized. This politicization is discernible from the college corridors to the legislative chambers. Redirection of this state of affairs seems very important for the future. The golden age of financing educational experiments is past. Those who help students will have to use different—but not necessarily new—approaches to help them. Institutions need the students to exist. If those institutions cannot learn to help students achieve academic proficiency, it is probable that they will have neither subjects nor funds. It has already been demonstrated in legislatures across the country that faith in what the community college can do has diminished, and support has often turned to rejection.

Excessive testimonies about what is done for special students are not necessary when institutions are able to show clearly that academic success is the main goal for them and that this goal is translated into student success. Whatever it takes to do this is what will have to be done. The approaches used may be simple and old-fashioned, or otherwise. Innovation, after all, is little more than new approaches to old ideas.

The most innovative and important service the institution can perform, particularly for the special student, is to help that student learn to read, write, compute at the required level, and think. The counselor (working together with the teaching faculty) needs to understand this priority and support it through all the aspects of professional work in order for the student to become intellectually and emotionally tough enough, as well as self-sufficient and capable enough, to get that good education.

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*Funding reductions, along with increased enrollments, make alliances between counselors and others critical. Complex problems can be solved by teams achieving synergism, as illustrated by the successful preadmissions assessment effort described.*

# *Team Roles for Counselors: Creating Synergism*

*Charles R. Dassance*
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Synergism *Cooperative action of discrete agencies such that the total effect is greater than the sum of the two effects taken independently.*
*Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*

Although the term *synergism* has been most closely associated with physiology, its meaning is useful when applied to a discussion of effective team efforts. Unquestionably, the achievement of many counseling-related goals in a community college is contingent upon the effective involvement of individuals other than counselors. This chapter presents a philosophical and practical rationale for the development of synergism through team efforts by community college counselors, as well as the challenges, processes, and problems of carrying out such efforts.

## The Rationale

From a philosophical point of view, there are a number of factors that support collaborative efforts between counselors and others. One such factor is the belief that community college counselors are *edu-*

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*cators* who accept responsibility for enabling the change and growth of students. Counselors who view themselves in this manner not only see the direct relationship between their knowledge of human development and the mission of the community college but also view their efforts as an integral part of the educational process. Working with others to address student development concerns is a change strategy that is repeatedly supported in the literature on the role of student personnel services (O'Banion, Thurston, and Gulden, 1972; Miller and Prince, 1976; Shaffer, 1980; Smith, 1982).

A second factor for team members, as well as for the students with whom they interact, is that teams reinforce the value of cooperative relationships, demonstrate the reality of human interdependence, and present a view of the educational process as being responsive to the multiple aspects of human growth. In addition, collaborative actions help various constituencies within the college and community understand the role and value of the counselor in the accomplishment of the educational mission of the institution. Counselor involvement in team efforts also reduces the risk of isolation from the mainstream of the educational process, and it is in the mainstream that counselors as educators belong.

Although philosophical considerations may seem sufficient cause for developing synergistic efforts, there are also practical reasons for such actions. Historically, the ratio of counselors to students has necessitated cooperation with and support from others in order to respond effectively to the developmental needs of students. Current and future reductions in funding, coupled with the likelihood of increased enrollment, appear to make alliances between counselors and others within the institution and community more critical than ever. While collaboration with others, within both the college and the community, does not ensure the growth and development of students, common sense suggests that chances for success increase when more individuals are committed to this goal. Indeed, as Miller and Prince comment, "no group can accomplish the educational mission alone, including the student affairs staff" (1976, p. xii). One obvious and related condition in support of team efforts pertains to the pattern of institutional decision making. Administrative leaders, rather than counselors, play the major role in the establishment of priorities through the budgeting process. Teaming with members of the administrative group would therefore seem important from a variety of standpoints.

From a practical point of view, it is also unrealistic to expect counselors, or any single group of professional educators, for that mat-

ter, to possess the knowledge and skills required to bring about the student's total education. It is more realistic for counselors to develop the ability to determine the skills and knowledge needed to accomplish a particular task and to match these with the human resources available in the college and community. In part, then, the counselor's job becomes one of marshalling resources effectively.

A final consideration regarding the practical value of teams relates to the nature of the community college student. As commuters, these students maintain strong ties to their community, with many remaining in the community after their formal educational experience ends. As Astin (1977) points out, not having students reside on campus reduces the chances for the community college experience to affect critically the overall development of students. Therefore, working effectively with community resources provides counselors with additional opportunities to have impact upon students.

**Individuals, Teams, and Synergy**

It is certainly not appropriate for all counseling/student development goals to be approached through teaming. Indeed, many goals may be accomplished more efficiently and effectively by counselors working alone. By the same token, not all cooperative or collaborative ventures are necessarily complex or synergistic. In a number of instances, the simple, joint actions of a counselor and one or more other individuals are both valuable and appropriate. For example, legislative mandates regarding institutional responsibilities for improving service to disabled individuals have led many counselors to establish cooperative relationships with vocational rehabilitation agencies or other specialists in the treatment of learning disabilities. Through such cooperative efforts, knowledge and skills are pooled and/or exchanged, resulting in better service to students. While such efforts are certainly one important level of collaboration, they contribute to the mistaken view of a team as simply counselors working cooperatively with others. In many cases, however, the nature of the goal to be achieved dictates a complex interaction of team members. For example, intentionally promoting the development of students through an academic advising system presents a more difficult challenge than can be met by counselors simply working cooperatively with others.

The nature of the task, then, magnifies the challenge of creating a successful team. It is in the response to more complex problems that a more complex level of team functioning and synergism is desirable;

indeed, it may be critical to success. "Applied to groups, synergy means looking at outcomes in a non-zero-sum way. Collaboration in planning, problem-solving, and so forth, generates products that are often better than those of any individual member or subgroup" (Jones, 1973, p. 108).

While developing synergistic teams may be difficult, the counselor, by virtue of training, should be in a position to do so. Opportunities for creating team approaches may present themselves as problems to be addressed (in the case of advising) and/or as part of carefully planned student services goals and strategies. Either possibility provides counselors with worthwhile challenges.

**The Challenge**

There are many factors for counselors to consider as they attempt to initiate teams with potential for synergy. This section contains an outline of those factors viewed as particularly important by the authors, as well as a series of questions that may serve as guidelines for interested practitioners.

***Clarity of Goal and Suitability of Team Effort.*** Two initial and essential considerations are establishing a clear definition of what needs to be done and evaluating the appropriateness of a team effort. Sherwood and Hoylman (1978) provide a useful set of guidelines on the relative merits of individual versus group problem-solving procedures. They conclude that suitable team tasks are those in which (1) a variety of information is required, (2) the operating effectiveness of the team is predictable, and (3) the acceptance of the solution is more important than its quality. In these cases, the advantages of a team outweigh such potential liabilities as time constraints, difficulties with conflict management, dominance of one individual, hidden agendas, and quick consensus with little attention to quality of solution.

In considering whether the goal is clear and a team approach is suitable, counselors might use the following questions as guidelines:

- What is the goal?
- Can the goal be stated clearly enough to be understood by others?
- Is the goal shared with others in the institution and community?
- How does the goal relate to the other goals and philosophy of the student services division?
- For what reasons would it be important that action in relationship to the goal be the result of a team effort?
- How likely is it that a team could produce satisfactory action?

***Institutional and Individual Readiness for Team Efforts.*** Individualism rather than teamwork has been a strong part of the American heritage. For example, the team-oriented "quality circles" style of management, although developed primarily by Americans, has been more rapidly and successfully implemented in the Japanese society, which has traditionally placed a higher value on cooperation. In addition, territorial lines traditionally found in most organizations (including higher education) are often a barrier to teaming. Conflicts among student development staff, instructional staff, and administrative services staff are an accepted part of organizational dynamics in many, if not most, institutions of higher education. It is, therefore, important that the counselor assess the institutional climate in terms of real or potential support for team efforts. In considering institutional readiness, counselors might ask themselves the following questions:

- In this college, do natural work groups function as teams?
- Do individuals from different segments of the college work together formally? informally?
- What kinds of attitudes exist regarding committees, task forces, and so on?
- To what extent are individuals rewarded for teamwork?

Counselors must also assess their individual readiness to function as members and facilitators of teams. Training that has, in theory, included the development of good communication skills, group dynamics, conflict management, and problem solving is good preparation for team efforts. As Smith (1982) notes: "People in the field today use these skills effectively with students. But they seldom transfer the same skills to help build the institution." In addition to an examination of skills, assessment must include an evaluation of one's own experiences and typical behavior as a team member or team leader. Counselors might consider the following questions in relation to self-assessment: How do I function as a member of the student services staff? Do we operate as a team? What feedback have I received about myself as a team member/leader? What skills and experiences can I bring to a team effort? Do I have sufficient respect among my colleagues to get a team started?

Ideally, counselors would have well-developed group participant/facilitator skills and work experience on a team-oriented staff in a highly supportive institution. The fact that such conditions exist for only a small minority of counselors need not deter other practitioners from working toward forming teams either within or beyond their work groups. It does, however, mean that expectations of counselors need to reflect the climate of the work environment. For example, counselors who are new to an institution or who have few connections beyond

their immediate work group may concentrate on developing relationships and initiating simple cooperative efforts. While these efforts are positive in and for themselves, they also become important groundwork for more complex team efforts in the future and may be initiated with that in mind.

***Selection of a Team.*** The selection of team members is directly related to a number of considerations already discussed and involves a great deal of judgment and creativity on the part of the counselor. For example, political considerations, which often have been ignored, play a key role in the selection of team members. Barr and Keating (1979) are quite direct in their assessment of the impact of institutional politics. "The key to successful student services programs frequently lies in the ability of the student affairs professional to understand and use the political system in a positive manner" (p. 16). In selecting the team, consideration must be given to those individuals who possess the necessary political connections to make goal achievement and program implementation easier. Failure to involve the right individuals disregards the reality of the college community as a political entity and thus reduces a team's chance for success.

Selecting a team also involves identifying the skills, information, or knowledge necessary to reach the desired goal. While the talents needed for success may not always be apparent, it is important that time and energy be expended in considering this factor during the selection process. For example, a person who is knowledgeable about human development theory would be essential to a team considering how to build a student services program that reflects a human development theory. Expertise in this theory may or may not come from the counselor.

While it might seem important for potential members of a team to be interested in the proposed team task, counselors need to be careful not to approach only those friends or associates with whom they feel comfortable or share interests. To do this limits the number of possible partners and may result in a team that does not contain the best possible combination of people. Individuals from all potential groups need to be given consideration—faculty, students, administrators, and paraprofessionals, as well as community volunteers, agency personnel, and educators in other settings.

Questions that might be of assistance to counselors as they select team members include the following:

- What groups within and outside of the college will have an interest in the outcome of any action proposed by a team?
- What individuals could represent groups that will be affected?

- What resources does the team need?
- Who possesses the skills and knowledge to help accomplish the task?
- Whose formal authority or informal influence will be necessary for successful goal achievement or implementation?
- Do those individuals have particular perspectives that might enrich the work of the team?
- What kind of balance should the team have?

**A Case Study**

To illustrate the process involved in developing a broad-based team with potential for synergy, a case study is presented. While successful team efforts from various institutions could have been presented, the authors believe the case study approach to be more appropriate. First, a successful approach at one institution can rarely be directly applied at any other institution, as consideration of variables unique to one's own setting is an essential part of the process. Second, the emphasis of this chapter is on creating team approaches rather than on problems or issues facing community college counselors. The case study discussed is based on an actual team approach used at a community college, and the factors considered are presented in the same order as that used in the previous section.

***Clarity of Goal and Suitability of Team Effort.*** The student services staff at a medium-sized community college was attempting to find ways of improving the process of initial assessment for new students. The staff believed the admission process to be a critical part of the student development program, since it provided both the opportunity to establish a productive student/counselor relationship and direction for the later growth-related activities of the student.

The goal of the student services staff was stated with reasonable clarity: to develop a preadmission program that provided students with accurate and usable information about the college and about themselves and that promoted students' responsibility for their own development. This goal related directly to the philosophy of the student services division, as well as to other divisional goals and objectives.

While the student services division viewed the assessment process as an opportunity to further its goals of affecting students' development, teaching faculty were concerned about the adequacy of the current system for placing students in courses. Thus, preadmission assessment was viewed by both counselors and teaching faculty as an area in need of improvement, albeit for quite different reasons. The student

services staff had definite ideas about how the preadmission assessment program should function, but realized that any successful program must have broad-based support. Faculty had definite concerns (for example, placement) and a different perspective about what the preadmission program should accomplish. Reactions from students also indicated dissatisfaction with the process. Thus, the student services staff saw the necessity of involving others in arriving at a solution and was hopeful that a team effort might produce a synergistic result.

***Institutional and Individual Readiness for Team Efforts.*** In considering the question of institutional support for a team approach, the student services staff considered a number of questions. It was determined that several natural work groups, including student services, already functioned using a team model. There was also a history of individuals from various segments of the college working together cooperatively. Counselors and faculty had team taught courses and worked together to solve various problems. These two groups generally respected each other and had found it quite natural and desirable to cooperate. In addition, administrators representing various constituencies routinely shared decision making, and students had always served on college committees. Thus, the institutional climate was considered favorable for using a team approach to address the concern about preadmission assessment.

Having operated on a team model, student services staff members possessed group participant skills and most also possessed effective facilitator skills. Counselors were also willing to give up individual recognition for the possibility of team success. There was little doubt, then, that a number of counselors on the student services staff possessed the skills and attitudes necessary to be part of or effectively lead a team approach that addressed the concerns of the preadmission assessment process.

***Selection of a Team.*** It was apparent to the student services staff that an effective program could be implemented only if those affected by and involved in the preadmission process were supportive. The dean of student services approached the dean of instruction, and they agreed on a team (task force) approach to preadmission assessment. The deans shared a mutual concern about this issue and had a history of working cooperatively on other matters. To reduce the number of potential political problems, the deans officially appointed team members, presented the charge, and agreed to respond to recommendations.

In choosing team members, a number of variables were considered. Because the problem had been defined as an institutional con-

cern, it was thought that no one segment of the institution should appear to be imposing its will on another segment. Further, there was clearly a need to represent the interests of the faculty, especially those in the areas of mathematics and English, and to represent students, all of whom were affected by the process.

Beyond the political questions, there was a need to choose team members who were interested in the problem, had knowledge of the current assessment and course placement practices, and were somewhat creative and task-oriented. Additionally, it was thought that team members should be perceived by the various constituents as effectively representing their concerns regarding assessment. While all team members did not need to possess these qualities, they appeared to be the qualities to be balanced within the team.

Five team members were appointed by the deans, including a faculty member in English, a faculty member in mathematics, a student, a division chair (social sciences and humanities), and the coordinator of counseling services. The deans of student services and instruction met with the team to provide its charge, appoint the coordinator of counseling services as chair, and specify the date by which a recommendation was desired. The deans then withdrew from further participation in the committee.

***The Results.*** This team worked very well together, developing into a cohesive group that produced a very useful and significant set of recommendations. Over a ten-month period, the team took on a life of its own, developing a strong commitment to solving the problem. The team demonstrated an ongoing sensitivity to various constituent groups and political issues. It published interim reports of its work, developed a draft recommendation, and conducted an open hearing for all interested parties. After the final recommendations had been submitted and approved by the deans, the team conducted a workshop for faculty on implementation of the program. As part of its work, the team also defined future work to be done in the area of assessment. While this initial team was dissolved when its work was completed, new teams have been formed to carry on the work of the original group.

There is nothing mysterious about the fact that this particular group was successful. Careful consideration in defining the goal and in selecting team members led to success. While it is not possible to describe the interaction of team members, much attention was focused on group dynamics. The counselor played a critical role in directing the team effort, serving as a facilitator concerned both with tasks and process considerations and with representing the student services point of view. The results of the team effort were clearly synergistic. The orig-

inal goal of the student services staff, developing a preadmission assessment program to benefit students, was achieved.

**Summary**

While there are compelling reasons for counselors to work cooperatively with others, as well as to initiate more complex team efforts, there are cautions to be considered. Each time a team is developed, the challenge of success is renewed. Constant changes in the institutional climate as well as individuals (to say nothing of the dynamics of each team) require attention to a unique set of variables. Care needs to be taken that a team does not become an end in itself. Boss and McConkie (1981) correctly addressed the possibility of a team becoming too powerful, placing its well-being before that of the organization. In addition, because the development of teams with potential for synergy can be very time-consuming, the nature of the task should clearly justify their existence.

Finally, while cooperative approaches to problems and issues have not been vigorously supported in our society, attitudes appear to be changing through necessity. In an excellent chapter on developing effective teams, Bentley (1980) points out, "One of the most important realities of our modern work life is this: In order to be successful, most of us must work with others. Not only must we work *with* others, we must collaborate with them. We are increasingly interdependent, each one of us contributing our part to the whole, requiring us periodically to gather together to share our perspectives and accomplishments and then make plans for future directions" (p. 27). Community college counselors, in our opinion, are no exception to Bentley's observation and must be involved in teamwork if they are to be more successful in fostering the development of students. Counselors are in a critical position to initiate teams and assist others within the college community to see the value of such efforts. While placing a team goal above individual needs and preferences may require personal sacrifice, the reward of accomplishing with others what one cannot accomplish independently is sufficient impetus for this.

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*Challenges facing counselors involve assessment, course, and program placement, developmental studies, and accountability. Witness Miami-Dade's answer to those challenges.*

# *Advisement and Counseling Challenges Facing Community College Educators: The Miami-Dade Experience*

*Richard B. Schinoff*

Community college counseling services in this decade must be responsive to the literacy crisis facing students and the need for quality education in the American community college. The 1980s require that students be part of professions that rely heavily on high technology and therefore demand high levels of literacy. Robert McCabe, president of Miami-Dade Community College, states that "there is a crisis in literacy in America. At the same time that the academic competencies of youth continue to decline, the level of those competencies needed for most employment continues to escalate. This has created a growing literacy gap between the capabilities of our young people and the requirements for employment" (1982b, p. 1). For example, in the college-parallel preprofessional programs, students with a high degree of literacy are handicapped when course work requires them to use table-top computers to solve complex probability problems in mathematics classes

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or to model courses or to design problems in engineering and architecture classes.

Another critical issue facing community college education is the crisis in the delivery of a quality educational program. McCabe states that "the community college must place emphasis on achievement, and hold to high expectations for program completion—in other words, the goal is excellence for everyone. Ultimately no one benefits when individuals simply pass through the program and become certified while lacking the competencies indicated by those certifications" (1982a, p. 4). This issue is directly related to the crisis in literacy. Both issues must be addressed by counseling services as programs are developed to meet the needs of today's community college student.

Five challenges facing counseling services in helping the community college meet these two critical issues of literacy and quality education are: (1) assessment—identifying deficiencies in basic skills through assessment; (2) course and program placement—providing help in course and program placement to students with career-choice problems; (3) development studies—providing a necessary support base through counseling services to enable students in development studies to succeed; (4) retention—utilizing counseling in an integrated way with other college resources to help keep students in college; and (5) accountability—developing an accountability program for counseling services as part of a mandated, college-wide program.

If counseling services are to meet these challenges and be successful in helping students, counseling and instructional departments must work together in a complementary manner. Educational leaders need to recognize the importance of this and make it a major thrust of the entire educational program of the college. At Miami-Dade Community College, such a partnership has been realized. The report of the new general education program, which was implemented in January 1982, includes the following statement:

> As the general education goals indicate, part of the educational process is to give direction to students and to assist them in evaluating their own potential in making career and life decisions. The advisement function should not be completely separated from the instructional process. For sustained advisement and counseling that might include career counseling, assessment of basic skills and study skills, and clarification of one's values, variable credit options might be developed (Lukenbill and McCabe, 1978, p. 90).

**The Challenge of Assessment**

The first challenge faced by counseling services is the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of students so that an appropriate program plan can be developed. When students arrive at a community college, information such as high school or transfer college grades, scores on national tests, and military records may be available for use by counselors. However, for many students, especially the adult learner, such information may not be available or may be outdated. Even if data are available, it is still important that a common measure of strengths and weaknesses be obtained for all students. Therefore an assessment program should be initiated so that students may be placed in appropriate program and course levels.

***How Should Tests Be Selected?*** The assessment program offered must measure skills that are needed for success in the programs offered by the college. Too often a standardized test is used that is not related to the specific mission, focus, or programs offered or to the levels of difficulty in the courses. Identifying both the appropriate skills needed for success at the community college and the level of measurement of such skills is a difficult task. Miami-Dade Community College developed such a list of skill levels but was not able to find a standardized test that measured all the stated skills that counselors required for course placement. The pros and cons of developing a test at the college or of having an external agency develop such a test were discussed at great length, with attention given to cost, reliability, validity, and norming concerns. It was decided to use an established, nationally normed test, even though it did not measure every item in the basic skill or developmental areas agreed upon at the college.

***Who Should Be Tested?*** Although it is important to have certain basic information about students before optimal course and program selection can take place, it may not be possible to assess all students. Financial and personnel resources may limit such a venture. Also, students may consider an extensive testing program another hurdle to pass in a bureaucratic educational process and thus may not enroll in college. The length of the test and the frequency with which it is offered may help solve these problems; a testing session of no more than two hours offered many times during the day may help.

If all students cannot be assessed, then a priority order should be established by counselors or the faculty to test those categories of students in which deficiencies might be greater than in other categories so that objective data will be available for placement. In the final

analysis, the question of who should be tested must be carefully thought through in terms of educational needs, available resources, and the focus and mission of the particular community college.

***What Should the Cut-Off Scores Be?*** In establishing cut-off scores, two placement errors must be considered. First, students who could have succeeded in the mainstream or in a higher-level course may be placed in remedial or lower-level classes because of assessment testing. Second, students registered in the mainstream may be placed in course at a level that is too high and fail. Research studies should be conducted to determine if the cut-off score is appropriate in relation to the number of students who pass or fail introductory courses directly related to the tests.

***How Should Scores Be Used?*** Since assessment scores form the basis for course level selection, should students be either required to take certain courses or prohibited from taking others based on these scores? The prescriptive versus nondirective approach to course planning is always a controversial issue. At Miami-Dade, "each student is required to demonstrate proficiency in the basic communication and computation skills as a condition for completion of the general education program and for awarding of a diploma... and to demonstrate basic reading and writing skills in order to be eligible to enroll in the required communications course" (Lukenbill and McCabe, 1978, p. 44).

Since the initial development of the general education program at Miami-Date, the college has moved even more toward a directive counseling approach in course placement. Computer locks in the online registration system preclude students with writing deficiencies from enrolling in English. Also, if students do not enroll for developmental math or score below the math cut-off, they are stopped from enrolling in the general education natural science core course or any mathematics courses offered at the college. Miami-Dade has taken a very active and directive approach in requiring students to enroll in certain courses in order to increase their academic skills and in blocking them from others. The college no longer allows students to select courses without regard to their own strengths and weaknesses. For those students with academic deficiencies, a directive approach is used in the advisement process; however, the counselor can grant an exception based on special circumstances.

## The Challenge of Course and Program Placement

Counselors at Miami-Dade must be knowledgeable about the requirements of many occupations, and they must also have at their

fingertips resources students can turn to for information about other career paths. Familiarity with the career counseling materials currently in print and knowledge of newly developed computer software programs to help with career selections are a must for the counselor if students are to select the best careers to meet their total needs. To facilitate the narrowing-down process, the counselor uses resources such as aptitude tests, interest inventories, and self-directed activities focusing around career exploration. For example, a student interested in a career in social work might be assigned an internship in a local welfare agency to gain first-hand experience in the field.

The counselor working with students individually or in a group setting has to help students define career goals in terms of their academic preparation, career interests, and aptitude. Once counselor and student have established a career direction, then educational goals can be established. It is within this context that the program of studies is chosen. At the freshman to sophomore level, an educational action plan can be general in nature and still provide introductions to a career field. For example, a student can explore the business programs at the lower-division level without deciding to specialize in marketing, accounting, finance, or personal management. It is the job of the counselor to keep as many options as possible open for students in the early stages of setting their educational goals.

Once a student's program choices have been made, the counselor must next suggest appropriate courses based on the student's background, preparation, upper-division transfer requirements, prerequisites and corequisites, or courses required in occupational preparation for immediate employment. The amount of knowledge needed by the counselor at this stage can be overwhelming. At Miami-Dade, a computer-processing program, the Advisement and Graduation Information System (AGIS), provides program status information by realigning the student's transcript by program graduation requirement areas rather than by semesters. The AGIS system uses all transfer credits, current term enrollments, and future term enrollments when performing graduation calculations. Another feature lists suggested and required courses for transfer. If students register for classes that are not required for the students' degree intention or are not required for transfer, special data mailers are produced and sent to the students. At the end of the semester, students are graduated automatically if they meet all program requirements, and the graduation statement is electronically placed on the student's transcript. Counselors do not have to spend valuable time doing graduation status checks. These AGIS reports are available from computer printers located in the counseling

offices. When the AGIS report is used in conjunction with other information available about students, the course selection and placement process becomes more manageable.

If course and program placement is to be a successful counseling program, counselors must provide an in-service training program for faculty involved in the advisement process. It is through the involvement of the teaching faculty that greater numbers of students can receive personalized attention. There simply are not enough counselors to provide all the services needed for all the students at a community college; the faculty must participate in the process. The counselors can provide faculty with specifics on graduation requirements, transfer requirements, and career opportunities available after graduation in a particular major. The faculty can then act as adjunct counselors in assisting students with course and program placement. Of course, the faculty should only be involved with those students who do not require the in-depth expertise of the professional counselor.

## The Challenge of Developmental Studies

Developmental studies programs in community colleges are organized to help students overcome deficiencies that will hinder their progress through their educational program. The counseling staff provides support services such as value clarification, time management, stress and anxiety reduction, goal setting and decision making, and study skills workshops. These series of services might be provided in individual counseling sessions, through workshops, or by teaching a student development course.

***Value Clarification.*** The counselor can help students clarify and define values of importance to them as they interact with others. The definition of the value structure for students will determine the types of careers they will select, the program of studies they will follow, and their commitment to succeed. For example, students who place a high value on money but also value interacting with and helping others should probably not enter the social work field. The counselor working with this type of student should suggest professions in which both human interaction and remuneration are high.

As students mature in a world in which they are surrounded by conflicting values, it is very important that their own value structures be constantly examined and redefined so they can find the best match between their values and their environment. As this examination continues with the help of the counselor, students' self-concepts will also be

examined. By determining the students' strengths and weaknesses, the counselor and the students will be better able to set realistic educational goals and establish a plan for success.

***Time Management.*** Another area in which the counselor can provide support is that of helping students plan ahead and better manage their time. Too often student failure may be related to procrastination—putting off assignments and decisions until there is not enough time left in which to accomplish a specific objective. In order to provide this service, counselors may ask students to maintain logs of daily activities to determine their value to the student. On the basis of this analysis, an action plan can be developed that will eliminate time wasters and allow the student to concentrate on those activities that are truly important.

***Stress and Anxiety Reduction.*** Throughout their educational careers, students will face stressful situations caused by the academic programs they are pursuing, as well as by incidents in their environment. The counselor can provide stress reduction services to students that will allow them to operate at a higher level of efficiency. The outcome of such a program is to allow students to recognize stressful situations, develop a plan to overcome the stress, and finally to implement an action program. As an example, students who are frightened of tests and score low on exams because of psychological stress rather than because of a lack of knowledge need help in overcoming this anxiety. The counselor can help them become mentally prepared for the test and help them raise their self-confidence so that the test can be thought of as a method to let others know how successful they are as students. Students' self-esteem must be at a high level in order for success to be possible. Students who have mastered the subject matter must be taught to believe in themselves and their abilities to demonstrate it on a test.

***Study Skills.*** The counselor can also work with students to improve their study skills. Workshops on taking objective and essay tests can be offered. Specifics on outlining books, note taking, and studying for exams are other factors important for success. A counselor can suggest places to study where the arrangement of the physical facilities is most conducive to concentration and learning.

The developmental studies program at Miami-Dade Community College relies heavily on professional counselors in devising strategies to help the developmental student be successful. The counselor works very closely with instructional faculty to identify students who need study skills assistance and to plan with the faculty a program that will help students master the course material.

***Goal Setting and Decision Making.*** The counselor can also help

developmental study students find ways to set realistic personal and educational goals based on a true assessment of the factors important for success. Through effective counseling programs, students can learn methods for obtaining facts, identifying options, evaluating alternatives, deciding on an action plan, and, finally, evaluating a decision based on outcomes. It is important for students to improve their decision-making process so that they can direct their own life activities and not rely on others for answers.

**The Challenge of Retention**

Counseling services should play a major role in helping students remain in college. It is the counselors who can help establish a campus climate that makes students feel they belong and are a part of the college community; who can establish support services that make a difference; who can provide assistance to students experiencing academic difficulty by reacting to an early academic warning mechanism; and, finally, who can establish programs to contact dropouts and determine whether they desire to return to school.

***Belonging.*** Although a community college is basically a commuter institution, life outside the classroom must be rewarding and worthwhile. Students should have opportunities to develop athletic abilities, cultural interests in the performing arts, and participation in leadership activities. Through events such as these, students can develop friendships with other students and with members of the faculty and administration and thus feel as if they are part of the college and that the college really wants to help them as persons. Students who persist in college and do not voluntarily withdraw are more likely to be those who have strong interaction with their institutions' social and academic structure (Tinto, 1975).

The counseling department should offer programs in which students can interact with others in group settings and learn more about themselves and the college. For example, at Miami-Dade, the Week of the Self program is presented at the beginning of each major term. During this week, presentations are made by teaching faculty and counselors on how to better survive in college and society and excel to one's greatest potential. This program includes such topics as: why people procrastinate, overcoming doubt, relying on intuition, asserting yourself and dealing with the consequences, and the impact of biology and culture on the self.

***Services That Make a Difference.*** Although students must feel

that they benefit from the academic programs and that they really learn, the support programs offered through the counseling center must also be of high quality and make a difference. Students must feel that the help they receive in assessment, advisement, and counseling is worthwhile. A discouraging experience with a counselor or a lack of good academic advisement information that results in students' taking courses that are unnecessary for a major may negatively influence a student's decision to persist in college.

***Early Academic Warning.*** If the mid-term academic progress of students could be seen by a counselor, additional help might be prescribed for students in academic difficulty. At Miami-Dade, the computerized Academic Alert System has been initiated. This system sends to each student a computer-generated letter based on academic progress and attendance as reported by faculty and on such student characteristics as test scores, credits of enrollment, and courses dropped. This letter suggests strategies to improve progress, gives encouragement to those doing well, and advises students with academic difficulties to make an appointment with a counselor. The counselor can then review their total progress at mid-term and prescribe some actions, such as reduced load or special tutoring, which might help students be more successful by the end of the semester.

***Dropout and High-Risk Contact Program.*** Contact programs for students who drop out of college or who are potential dropouts should be initiated by counselors. Probationary students should be contacted during the semester to determine what kinds of intervention programs might help them be successful by the end of the term. Students who do not return the succeeding semester also should be contacted to determine whether further encouraging steps are necessary to help them return to school. Finally, students who stop attending classes during the term should be contacted to learn if strategies can be developed so that the same situation will not recur. Although retention responsibilities are shared by many at the college, the counselor should be the catalyst in initiating programs that will help students be successful and remain in school.

## The Challenge of Accountability

The final challenge facing not only counseling services but all of education is accountability. The State of Florida established in 1976 Standards of Accountability in Community Colleges and gave the institutions five years to develop reporting measures. In the spring of

1981, the first accountability report was prepared and sent to the state legislature. In the counseling area, the standard requires that "each college shall provide a system which enables students to set goals and pursue programs through which they attain these goals" (Florida State Board of Education, 1976). Whether externally mandated or not, it is important that a process be established for evaluating services. The following are the essential steps used at Miami-Dade as part of the accountability program.

***Identify Goals and Objectives.*** Goal and objective statements are sometimes used interchangeably; however, a *goal* statement is usually meant to be a higher-level order statement, and *objectives* are used to implement the broader goals. Once the general overall goals of a counseling program are established, the specific objectives must be delineated. The objectives should be related to changes in student behavior or practice that can be measured. Unless something is known about the outcome of a counseling visit, very little can be said about the accountability of the area. For example, one of the goals of the counseling area on the South Campus of Miami-Dade Community College is to provide information services to students. Under this goal are many objectives. One objective is for the Career Planning and Advisement Division to assist undecided students in obtaining information necessary to define tentative educational goals, plan academic programs, and select courses for the next term ("Student Services Objectives," 1977).

***Strategies to Deliver a Service.*** Once the objective is agreed upon, a series of strategies is developed to implement the objective. For the objective stated above, strategies developed by the counselors are: to provide information on college programs, degrees and other matters relevant to academic decision making; to make referrals to the career center or appropriate departments for additional occupational information; and to make referrals for career counseling, testing services, or enrollment in the Psychology of Career Adjustment course.

***Specific Outcomes.*** In order to measure an objective, it is necessary that the outcomes of the objective be stated in very specific measurable outcomes. To illustrate, using the same objectives as stated previously, undecided students will indicate that they have secured the information necessary to begin planning a course of action or that they have received a suitable referral by responding on an evaluation instrument.

***Levels of Performance.*** Acceptable levels of performance must be agreed upon by the professional delivering the services and by those

involved in the administration of the area. This is a critical area, since levels of performance must be based on resources available. The performance level should be reviewed periodically to be certain that it is realistic. For purposes of illustration, the criteria for acceptable outcome performance in working with undecided students consists of having 60 percent of undecided students respond affirmatively on an evaluation instrument of the services received.

***Data Collection.*** Once objectives are set, outcomes identified, strategies developed, levels of performance established, and the services rendered, data must be collected to determine the value of the services. Surveys may be distributed, telephone calls may be made to those who receive the services, or the counselor may keep a log of the outcomes of the services provided. As long as the sources of data are agreed to in advance with the professional involved, the data collected will indicate the level of attainment. For the purposes of the objective used as an example, an evaluation instrument is distributed at the close of the counseling interview or after students participate in a counseling activity.

***Evaluating the Objective.*** After the evidence is collected, it must be compared to the level of performance as stated in the objectives statement. This comparison is the measure of success on a particular objective. It may also be possible to use cost-analysis data to relate success with institutional expenditure of funds. On the South Campus of Miami-Dade Community College, the dean periodically meets with the managers of the several student services areas to determine if objectives are being met at the level indicated. For several years, all objectives were measured each major semester. At present, only objectives that have changed or objectives for newly added programs need to be measured. If an objective is not satisfactorily met, it is carefully reviewed in terms of services offered or the level of desired attainment.

## Summary

During the 1980s, in order to help meet the critical issues of literacy and quality education confronting community colleges, the counseling staff must be prepared to deal with the challenges of assessment, course and program placement, developmental studies, retention, and accountability in an organized manner. When programs are established in these areas, the counseling services will become part of the solution to the critical issues facing community college education.

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*Since the majority of community college students are enrolled in multi-unit systems, the services they receive merit special attention.*

# *Counseling in a Multi-College System: The Los Amigos Experience*

*Alice S. Thurston*

In areas considered important to the effectiveness of the system, multi-college systems are bureaucracies; finances and instruction are good examples. In areas considered peripheral, a loose confederation is likely to exist. Confederation decisions involve presidents, deans, faculty representatives, union leaders, and perhaps members of the board. Thus, joint action is difficult unless central leadership considers a matter of sufficient concern to intervene and views the political storm as worth weathering.

Since counseling is often viewed as a supplemental—and thus peripheral—service of alleged but unknown worth, it tends to fall in the confederated category. Translated, this means, "If everyone agrees and you can find the money, we'll do it."

A significant proportion of community college students are enrolled in multi-unit systems. For this reason, the counseling services they receive merit special attention. A recent survey of counseling practices among the colleges in a large multi-college system illustrates the

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impact of loose confederation on counseling services and on the system as a whole.

**The Los Amigos Colleges**

This system served an area of more than six hundred miles, with a population greater than Chicago. Over half of its students were from ethnic backgrounds, with rising numbers of Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. Women outnumbered the men. The average student attended part-time, was over age twenty-one, and was in his or her first year; the age span was from fourteen into the eighties. Sizable numbers transferred laterally among the colleges or from surrounding universities or foreign institutions. Instructional programs varied, especially in technical areas; one college was primarily vocational.

The colleges were located in industrial, urban, suburban, and semi-rural areas, some middle- and working-class, some impoverished. Differences in communities and in technical programs created variations in student mix. While minorities were enrolled at each of the colleges, proportions ranged from essentially Black to mostly Hispanic to predominately Caucasian. The smallest college enrolled three thousand students; the largest, twenty-four thousand *(Enrollment and Attendance, July 1981)*.

Except for data in Sheldon and Hunter's *Statewide Longitudinal Study* (SLS), which included two of the Los Amigos Colleges, little was known about students' goals and expectations. SLS findings indicated that the same prototypes existed in all of the colleges studied (for example, the "undisciplined transfer," "the athlete," the "expediter," and the "second careerist") but in varying degrees (Sheldon and Hunter, 1981).

Counselors differed throughout the system in terms of professional preparation expertise, and commitment, although all held counseling credentials. Some student services deans had little if any background in the field; they had served in other administrative capacities before assignment to their present positions during a management reshuffle. Others were very knowledgeable and creative.

Educational services, which included student services, was an important division at the central office. Most attention, however, went to instruction. The administrator directly responsible for student services was deeply involved in restructuring the financial aid program. His designee to work with counseling had no training or experience in this area.

**The Survey Process**

During the fall of 1981, the author was hired as a consultant at the request of the chancellor "to organize and chair a districtwide committee to analyze current counseling practices and make recommendations for improvement (Los Angeles Community College Contract, 1981). Specifically, the committee was to make preliminary recommendations regarding student assessment, academic advisement, services to students planning to transfer, orientation, counselor accountability, programs to enhance career planning, and programs for personal development of students. All this was to be done through a committee, in four months.

After preliminary conferences with central office staff and each college president, and with the assistance of the Counseling Department chairs of all the colleges, an advisory committee was organized. The committee consisted of thirteen members: several counselors and counseling chairs, a dean of students, a dean of instruction, the president of the systemwide Counselors' Association, a representative of the academic senate, the chair of a group of institutional research coordinators from all the colleges, and several representatives from educational services. Thus, the committee was broadly representative not only of counselors but also of institutional researchers and central office staff. It was leavened by the active involvement of an experienced dean of instruction and by the senate representative, who provided a faculty point of view.

At its first meeting, in mid-October, the committee agreed to conduct the survey by dividing into teams to visit colleges within the system; some committee members made more than one visit. Interviews were conducted with student services staff at each college using a semi-structured interview format developed by the consultant to survey counselor roles, student assessment, academic advisement, services for transfers, orientation, and counselor accountability. One weakness of the study was that people holding similar positions were not always interviewed. While the data collected were in some cases sketchy, they drew a picture of current practices and concerns in the areas the committee was asked to study. These visits had the further value of exposing members of the committee to what was going on elsewhere. Some of the ideas they brought back were immediately considered at their own institutions.

The committee met again in mid-November to review interview data, which the consultant summarized. The next step, the committee

decided, was to regroup into subcommittees to draft recommendations in the areas surveyed. Again, committee members followed through. Subcommittees met, supplied with background materials by the consultant, and drafted their recommendations.

At the final meeting in mid-December, a set of committee recommendations was agreed upon during a five-hour, sometimes heated discussion. Most areas of disagreement were resolved by consensus. In others, mainly relating to preassessment testing and whether results should be used for voluntary or mandatory course placement, the committee could not agree. The resulting recommendations noted these unresolved differences, and suggested further steps.

## The Findings

***The Role of the Counselor.*** In the Los Amigos System, counselors' roles were many-faceted. Counselors told us they spent the great majority of their time doing educational counseling and advisement, although no records were kept. They saw walk-in clients, usually for brief sessions. They trained and worked with peer counselors when funds were available. They held conferences with students on probation or with those who had been disqualified. Counselors were also involved in recruitment, articulation with high schools and universities, and relations with community agencies. They participated in counseling department meetings and staff development sessions, taught personal development courses, made campus presentations, attended interdepartmental meetings, and served on college committees. They developed informational materials for students, held noncredit workshops and seminars, and gave tests. They were responsible for orientation. Counselors were assigned to financial aid offices, veterans' offices, handicapped programs, women's centers, and the state-supported Education Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS). Some did limited research on student data. Some were assigned to career counseling centers.

As usual, expectations of what counselors *should* do, varied (Ancheta, 1982). Faculty wanted them to advise every student prior to registration and to place students appropriately on the basis of preassessment testing. Administrators found them useful in a variety of tasks and tended to assume that they would personally handle whatever testing was done. Students wanted answers, sometimes not knowing what to ask. Counselors tried to meet all these expectations and carry out all these roles. They said, "There are too many students for too few staff."

No agreed upon definition of role existed within the system. The Counselors' Association had developed a statement of philosophy that defined a counseling program as an integral component of the educational process. One counselor put it this way: "The counselor is a facilitator for students in aiding them through the educational process."

Student development as a unifying concept was not familiar to many counselors (or administrators) in the system. In recent years, staff development had been left to the colleges. Lacking a clear role definition, understaffed, and often under attack from faculty who wondered "What do they do, anyway?," counselors were typically overextended and undervalued.

***Student Assessment.*** Preassessment procedures varied from college to college. All of the colleges required some sort of English test for students who planned to take English; however, students in most instances could postpone enrolling in English while registering in courses in which writing skills were of importance. A variety of English assessment measures were used, chosen either by English departments or in consultation with counselors.

Various academic departments, including mathematics, nursing, electronics, chemistry, and psychology had adopted standardized assessment measures or developed their own instruments. Special tests were usually given to limited-English-speaking students for placement in English courses. (Those who came on student visas had been prescreened in English skills.) Vietnamese refugees and other foreign-born students who "walked in off the street" with little command of the English language encountered problems when they enrolled directly in college-level courses without preassessment; this concern was generally recognized but not addressed.

Some colleges were satisfied with their preassessment procedures. Others favored a systemwide assessment program or further improvement in what they were already doing. With the wide array of testing instruments used, central computer input and access were not possible.

Except in a few colleges that used assessment data in orientation advising sessions, the only feedback to students on their strengths, weaknesses, and progress came through end-of-semester grades. One college was planning to issue a mid-semester progress report. Students at most of the colleges had the option of seeking career testing and counseling at a career center. Counselors were available for assessment and planning conferences; the numbers of students seen on a voluntary basis were not known, estimates ranging from minimal to 80 percent. However, many contacts may have been cursory, at a walk-in desk or during registration.

***Academic Advisement.*** Counselors were responsible for academic advising. Entering or continuing students could request an appointment prior to registration; however, relatively few did so. Students seen at registration were encouraged to return for more in-depth planning. Students had been known to brag, "I made it all the way through and I never saw a counselor." There was widespread concern among student services staff that students who most needed to see a counselor before registering did not do so.

Paraprofessionals and peer counselors were used with varying success when funds were available. Only one of the colleges had been able to fund an instructor/adviser program, although counselors felt the use of trained faculty advisers was highly desirable.

***Services for Students Intending to Transfer.*** While large numbers of students indicated their intent to transfer, the number that actually entered the state universities had been dropping. Even taking into account the wide disparity of motivation and preparation among those who said they planned to transfer (Sheldon and Hunter, 1981), both faculty and administrators were looking for ways to be of greater help to transfers, feeling that transfer rates needed improvement.

At the time of the survey, only one college had developed an effective identification of would-be transfers. Transfer-bound students were encouraged through publications to make use of the services available.

Among special programs developed by counselors and administrators were seminars for students planning to transfer, university representatives on campus, group meetings by majors, and transfer committees. One college sent letters to intended transfers, identified from their applications, recommending that they see a transfer counselor before registering. At another college, counselors visited classes to discuss transfer. There were bus trips to the local universities, follow-up workshops, and plans for a transfer resource center. Most of the colleges had college days where representatives of four-year colleges and universities were available to talk with students.

Los Amigos students who transferred to local universities were interviewed by Cardinal in connection with her doctoral dissertation (1981). Their comments on the transfer counseling they had received are summarized as follows: A few (both persisters and nonpersisters) felt that they had received good help and guidance. Many, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the counseling, or lack of counseling, they had received. Those who had seen counselors felt that they had not been well-enough informed about breadth and field requirements

and that they had been misinformed at times and had taken the wrong courses. Others, who had had no contact with counselors, felt that the colleges were remiss in not strongly encouraging or requiring them to see a counselor more than once. The transferred students said that counselors should see transfers early to begin preparing them. Counseling should be more personalized; an assigned counselor would be helpful. Better academic advising is needed. Students from noncollege families are not aware of what they are getting into and are especially in need of help, although they may not realize it at the time. It is obvious that transfers did not feel the current laissez-faire system was providing them with the help they needed for successful transfer.

***Orientation for Students.*** Orientation sessions were held at each of the colleges, planned and conducted primarily by counselors. While generally required, orientation attendance was actually voluntary, since means for enforcing attendance were lacking. Estimates of new students who attended varied from a few to as high as 80 percent.

Although several colleges were including an advising component, orientation content typically included a description of college services and requirements, with the traditional campus tour. Special services (EOPS, veterans, and handicapped services) usually oriented their own students.

Evaluation of orientation at the time of the survey was sketchy. Two colleges used student evaluation forms. Others counted heads.

***Counselor Accountability.*** While there was interest among counseling staff in developing a more comprehensive accountability model, accountability consisted primarily of tallies of student contacts. Counseling outcomes are, of course, difficult to measure; counselors generally felt that they were impossible to deal with. At one of the colleges, the research office regularly conducted a student survey from which counselors received feedback. Student ratings were collected under provisions of the union contract. Several colleges were using student evaluation forms periodically or after each appointment.

## Committee Recommendations

***The Counselor's Role.*** The committee agreed that the main task of the counselors is to assist students with their career, academic, and personal planning. There was consensus that counseling time should not be diverted or used for noncounseling duties that could be performed by trained paraprofessionals or peer counselors or assigned to other areas. The committee felt that administrative aspects should be

parcelled out and allocated to other areas or departments. The tasks the committee members felt were most appropriate for counselors included academic advisement; educational and career counseling; probation and disqualification counseling; contacts with high school students, staff development, training paraprofessionals, peer counselors, and faculty advisers; attending departmental and vocational advisory committee meetings; developing relations with faculty; preparing counseling-related informational materials; handling counseling mail and reports; reviewing folders of applicants for hiring; attending workshops; and doing transfer follow-up work. All counselors, regardless of their assigned source of funding and assigned area, should be part of the counseling staff and work together.

Paraprofessionals should be used to provide testing and registration support, prepare advisement checklists, handle special college events, represent the college at community activities, and do preliminary high school recruitment. Other departments of the college should assist in academic advisement, recruit, develop publications, prepare reports, provide study skills instruction, write grant proposals, conduct transfer research, develop articulation agreements, and carry the overall responsibility for orientation.

***Assessment and Placement.*** The committee generally favored a systemwide assessment program, although representatives of two colleges disagreed. There was also disagreement on whether the same tests should be used at all colleges. Those who supported a standardized assessment program pointed to the large numbers of lateral transfers within the system, while those opposed argued that the same instruments might not be appropriate for a given college, depending on the programs offered. The problem of different levels of developmental courses at the various colleges was discussed.

There was agreement on the need for research to determine the predictability of test scores. Committee members also agreed that skills in English, reading, and mathematics should be assessed; reading was included because of its importance not only in reading courses but also in technical courses for which a high reading level is needed.

Opinions varied as to whether course placement should be mandatory. It was felt that most students would accept recommended placement. Humanizing the assessment process was discussed. For example, gross placement could be made using test scores with departmental placement on the basis of in-class screening, self-assessment measures could be used as a warm-up prior to receiving test results, and there should be some counselor discretion on the basis of other available

data. Instruments selected should be normed on community college students, have face validity, and be reasonably short.

Implications for curriculum were noted. Many more sections of developmental courses would be needed, with decreases in college-level courses. More faculty would need training to teach developmental courses. Moreover, the current image of developmental courses as "dummy courses" should be changed.

Doubts about the use of a systemwide battery and about mandatory placement reflected anxieties of staff at some of the colleges. Other colleges would be willing to participate in a trial run which might encourage reluctant colleges to become involved later.

***Academic Advisement.*** The committee felt that academic advisement should be a responsibility shared with faculty. To develop closer working relations with instruction, it was suggested that each teaching department designate a faculty member as a liaison with counseling, rather than vice versa.

Advising should be a required component of orientation. Whenever possible, advisers for continuing students should be the same persons they worked with in orientation, to ensure continuity of contact. Both initial advising and advising of continuing students should take place well in advance of registration.

Carefully selected and trained faculty are needed to serve as advisers. They should be appropriately remunerated on an hourly basis or by contract negotiation as part of their load. Instructors have valuable information on special requirements in their fields, in both transfer and technical areas.

***Services to Transfer Students.*** Comments from students who transferred to state universities clearly indicated the need for a system of periodic assessment of plans and progress. Seminars should be held on transfer requirements at specific universities. Information regarding articulation agreements and general education requirements should be collected by the central office and made available to the colleges, possibly via computer. Other recommendations included a transfer club or group, financial aid workshops, college days, EOPS conferences, video tapes on senior institutions, peer counseling by students who have transferred, field trips to university campuses, and packets of pertinent materials. Transfer counseling should be mandated and personalized, with built-in continuity. Appropriate faculty involvement is needed.

Feedback on students' progress after transfer needs further attention. More should be known about problem areas. Research

efforts are handicapped by the lack of uniform reporting from various state institutions.

***Orientation.*** Orientation should include an assessment and advising component, with special advising groups for majors and undecided students. Attendance should be required for students taking more than six units, with the exception of those who hold associate or higher degrees.

Content should include information about the college and its resources. In addition, group advising should use self-assessment and test data as a basis for academic planning in preparation for registration. Evaluation should be built into the program (Thurston, 1981).

**Some Conclusions**

In the absence of central leadership, the direction of counseling services was shaped by college priorities, staff skills, community pressures, union concerns, and financial resources. Each college moved in its own way in terms of what counselors did, what assessment instruments were used, the amount of attention given to educational counseling and advisement, services for transfers, and the extent to which students' developmental needs were identified and dealt with. Although in theory students were getting comparable educational experiences at each college in the system, support services varied considerably. Because of differences in pretesting measures and placement criteria, a student could be in developmental courses at one college but qualified for college-level instruction at another.

Counseling services were available at all of the colleges, but many students did not use them. Left to their own devices to choose programs and courses on the basis of little if any information about themselves or course content, many students became academic drifters or attrition statistics. The counseling advisory committee clearly saw the need for involving students in a systematic program of assessment, goal setting, academic planning, appropriate course placement, and periodic consultation with a counselor. This need was strongly expressed by transferred students. Yet the committee's recommendations were virtually unheard and resulted in little perceptible change. Central office staff who participated on the committee were involved and supportive; they were, however, lower-echelon administrators without power to cause change.

The fact that the committee was able to accomplish its basic task with considerable enthusiasm and unanimity indicates potential among

the ranks for agreement on the scope and objectives of counseling. What was missing was commitment by top leadership to steer the system toward recognition that what happens to students outside as well as inside the classroom significantly affects their development. Such leadership would involve systemwide decisions on staffing, the role of counseling, preassessment testing and its use, and a system through which students consulted periodically with counselors. Staff development in the use of preassessment measures, multi-cultural awareness, and group work would be essential, using resources already available within the system. Agreement on a systemwide preassessment program would give a picture of students' developmental needs on which more effective solutions could be built and monitored, using central office and college research capabilities.

Chickering, in his introduction to *The Modern American College,* wrote the following:

> The need for a more direct concern with human development in education has been recognized by increasing numbers of persons across the country—by those in positions of established leadership as well as by many others less well known, working daily with students and pushing as best they can for institutional changes and professional developmental activities that will advance the broader goals of human development. Certainly, these persons do not constitute a majority. That is not the way change occurs. There will be no massive conversion. Change will occur incrementally as increasing numbers of teachers, departments, schools, and colleges tackle self-consciously and directly one or a combination of the general education objectives or one or more major dimensions of human development.
>
> There is room for increased hope because our understanding of human development, of the conditions that encourage and retard it, and of the impacts of varied institutional arrangements and human interactions, has increased dramatically in the last forty years (1981, p. 5).

In the Los Amigos system, there was no agreement on the central task of the colleges. The role of the counselor was what counselors, or administrators, or faculty thought it should be. Although counseling was generally viewed as a good thing, it was not perceived as central to the educational enterprise, and it was thus left to drift. Informal structures, such as the Counselors' Association and the Counseling Depart-

ment chairs tried to give it direction but lacked the power or support to be effective. A committee of central office staff, presidents, and senate representatives tackled preassessment problems but were unable to agree on a solution.

Los Amigos is not unique. This author has been involved in the operation of five multi-college systems and, through accreditation teams visits and consultations, with a number of others. In a sense the Los Amigos picture is a composite one. Almost from the inception of community colleges, the rhetoric has listed counseling and guidance among its primary functions; the reality has often been second-class status. Without a unifying purpose, chasms have developed between instructors and counselors, with the result that many students seem relatively untouched by their often brief exposure to higher education.

New research findings about human development will require major shifts on the part of administrators and faculty—shifts not only in terms of concern for the whole spectrum of students and the varying life stages they represent, but in terms of the purpose of education itself.

Multi-college systems across the country enroll vast numbers of students. If they can make the transition to a more direct concern for human development, they will make a significant contribution to the maturing of our society. And society is in dire need of maturing.

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*Community college counseling roles and functions are sufficiently different from those in other colleges to merit separate preparation and nurturance.*

# *Preparing and Nurturing Professional Counselors*

*Don G. Creamer*

Counseling may be seen fundamentally as the same activity whether the persons receiving the counseling are young or old, in or out of school, black or white, man or woman, married or unmarried. On the one hand, this view holds that the skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge of the counselor do not vary significantly according to type of counselee. On the other hand, counseling may be seen as being contextually bound—that is, environmental circumstances and client needs control to a large extent the application of counselor skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge, even though most college counselors possess roughly equivalent skills. This second view recognizes that a given setting, such as a community college, may require a proportionately greater application of a particular intervention, such as remedial teaching, than would a contrasting setting, such as a residential, liberal arts college, which could require a preponderance of personal interventions. Both perspectives are useful in examining community college counselor preparation and continued development.

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## What Makes the Community College Counselor Different?

A premise of this chapter is that community college counselor roles and functions differ sufficiently from counselor roles and functions in other types of colleges to merit separate treatment of the preparation and nurturance of professional counselors. A case could be mounted to refute this premise of sufficient difference, based largely on the belief that people are people, both in the role of counselor and in the role of student. However, a stronger case can be mounted to support the premise, based both on the contextual requirements of the community college in relation to other types of institutions of higher learning and on the highly variable nature of the community college clientele. The premise means not that community college counselor roles and functions absolutely are discrete from any other types of counselor roles and functions but that the nature of the environment, considering especially the nature of the clientele, may require a somewhat unique pattern of interventions seen as planned activities to intercede on behalf of students.

Special institutional characteristics of the community college that may make necessary a unique pattern of intervention include: a specialized mission, emphasizing an open-door admissions philosophy, a community-oriented responsiveness, and comprehensiveness of curriculum; a focused teaching/learning pattern, emphasizing classroom-oriented activities; and a commuter-oriented student/institutional relationship, emphasizing high goal commitment, especially short-term career goals. Interdependently, the special clientele characteristics of the community college include: wide variation in student characteristics, especially in age and proclaimed career goals; a high degree of tentativeness toward institutional affiliation, often because of a need to transfer to some other institution to complete educational plans; and a skewed distribution of academic attributes. At the same time differences between counselor roles and functions will be discussed, areas of similarity will be noted, especially in the necessary knowledge bases of counselors.

## Preparing Professional Community College Counselors

The overriding concern of graduate preparation programs is to put in place a knowledge base sufficient for the professional either to begin practice or to continue at a new level, with the capacity to under-

stand certain human and institutional phenomena relating to education and the development of students. Shaping of values, attitudes, and beliefs, at least partially, is the responsibility of formal graduate preparation. Intervention skills and special role-related competencies that go beyond certain demonstrable minimums required for classroom and clinical exit performance normally are shaped on the job.

Such a general statement of parameters of graduate preparation leaves wide latitude for program variation within the boundaries. What knowledge bases, intervention skills, and contextual characteristics will be featured in a particular program? To the extent that preparation programs are controlled by knowledge bases and intervention skill requirements, limited agreement stated in broad, sweeping terms among graduate educators is possible. However, to the extent that preparation may be controlled by what is believed to constitute the actual on-the-job behavior of counselors and the conceptual model that describes it, little agreement is evident. Instead, many distinctive perspectives can be found, especially in the community college setting.

Young (see Chapter Eight of this volume), for example, describes two models for practice, including a community-based model and a human resource development model. These perspectives look broadly at all of student services, not just counseling, but evidence clearly the variety of patterns found in community colleges. By contrast, models for practice sometimes focus on the principal role of the student service professional; examples include those presented by Ambler (1980), Banning (1980), Betz (1980), and Brown (1980), who discuss administrative roles, campus ecology manager roles, counseling roles, and student development educator roles, respectively. These perspectives do not focus exclusively on the community college setting, but they frequently are operable there.

It is axiomatic that the counselor educator must have a clear sense of what professionals are expected to do and how their activities may be carried out in order to prepare them adequately. Unfortunately for the counselor educator, expectations of community college counselors vary considerably, to a far greater extent than do those of university or liberal arts college counselors, depending on the self-interests of the observer. For example, the community college administrator, the teacher, the student, and the counselor may hold radically different views on the counselor's role and function. The administrator may give priority to recruitment and retention of students; the student may perceive the counselor as a problem solver; and the counselor may

prefer direct personal and career development activities. Such probable variation in community college counseling may perplex the counselor educator, indicating possibly that whatever focus may be given to the preparation program, it may be felt to be inappropriate to meet some expectations much of the time.

Even though the self-interests of the observer may influence expectations of counselor roles and functions, certain common patterns may be found in most community colleges. Each pattern, or perspective, may be characterized by its primary thrust or the implicit priorities inherent in the general approach. Seldom are the perspectives found in their pure form; that is, practice at a particular college may dictate using whatever approach works or is immediately indicated, and thus analysis of a single operation might reveal elements of each perspective. Still, a dominant thrust and observable priorities, whether stated or unstated, normally align community college counseling programs with one of the other perspectives depicted in Figure 1. Each perspective is juxtaposed with major role expectations and a general content focus required to prepare counselors for the approach. Neither the list of major role expectations nor the preparation focus is intended to be exhaustive; rather, both are meant to illustrate primary thrusts or implicit priorities of each perspective.

***The Educational Generalist.*** By far the most common perspective for community college counseling practice is an educational generalist model. In this model, the counselor may be a "jack-of-all trades" expected to act as a support person in a strict sense, aiding with recruitment, admissions, registration, advising, scheduling of classes, testing, and financial aid. The counselor also may be seen in this perspective as aide to teachers, administrators, and other educational personnel, such as media specialists. In this view, the counselor frequently is called on as institutional ombudsman and institutional researcher.

The preparation of the educational generalist is formed on essentially a theoretical knowledge basis, such as on the experience of other professionals and on research findings. The program promotes knowledge of students, institutions, and common service delivery systems and relies heavily on practice and internships. The primary intervention skills needed in this perspective are administration and counseling.

***The Counselor/Service Specialist.*** In many community colleges, counselors act in much the same manner as do social workers. Their responsibilities focus clearly on the student and his or her unique needs. Since community college students are so diverse, the types of

**Figure 1. Community College Counseling Perspectives, Role Expectations, and Preservice Preparation Foci**

| | *Primary Thrusts* | |
|---|---|---|
| *Perspective for Practice* | *On the Job Role Expectations* | *Content Focus of Preparation* |
| Educational Generalist | Recruitment of students<br>Academic advising<br>Student activities advising<br>Financial aid officer<br>Testing and appraisal<br>Counselor<br>Problem solver<br>Researcher | Overview of traditional services<br>Administrative skills<br>Hands-on experience<br>Study of the student<br>Study of the instructional setting<br>Psychometrics<br>Counseling |
| Counselor/Service Specialist | Personal counseling<br>Marriage counseling<br>Student health<br>Financial aid officer<br>Special services, services to handicapped students, veterans, etc. | Counseling—group and individual<br>Community and society<br>Individual handicaps and special groups<br>Sociological view of students<br>Psychometrics |
| Educational Programmer | Teacher<br>Consultant<br>Administrator of major programs<br>Program evaluator<br>Curriculum specialist<br>Remediation specialist<br>Trainer for peer counselors | Foundations of education<br>Curriculum and program design<br>Administration and finance<br>Teaching, consultation, and environmental management<br>Learning styles |
| Developmentalist | Learning and development expert<br>Assessment of development specialist<br>Program designer<br>Program evaluator<br>Individual and institutional change agent<br>Personal and group counseling<br>Career development specialist<br>Researcher | Human development theory and research<br>Developmental programming<br>Psychometrics<br>Counseling theory and techniques<br>Career development<br>Intervention skills<br>Research |

needs may range far and wide, from parental or marriage counseling to probation counseling, from physical health and hygiene to mental disorders, from referral for money to referral for abortion. In this perspective, counseling is the dominant requirement, usually for individuals, but not limited to within the college walls. The counselor may often work outside the college, but such work is usually on behalf of an enrolled or prospective student.

Preparation for the counselor/service specialist professional is simpler than for other roles in the sense that intervention skills dominate the preparation focus. Persons preparing for such roles need extensive skills in counseling and even in therapy. The primary knowledge base required in this perspective is knowledge of self and of others and theories of individual change. Theory and research may draw heavily upon sociology to understand groups in society.

***The Educational Programmer.*** The educational programmer perspective on counseling in community colleges represents a significant departure from the norm. Fewer colleges actually offer tangible support for the approaches appropriate to this model than for the educational generalist of the counselor/service specialist roles. Support for this approach is increasing, however, and it represents a major future perspective for professional practice. This approach may gain in popularity for at least two reasons: the approach is cost-efficient in that the professional's time and energy go into conceiving, planning, directing, and evaluating programs to affect students, leaving to others, in many cases, the actual execution of interventions; and the approach capitalizes on the multiplier effect in the sense that the programmer's talents are diffused throughout the college and become institutionalized through other regular employees. The approach may be useful especially when applied to part-time, evening, and off-campus students.

The educational programmer is a teacher, consultant, and administrator whose concern is to identify unmet student needs and to design activities to help meet the needs in a preventive, educational mode, such as by creating special classes or clinics that can be absorbed easily into the system. The most desirable results of the programmer's work is that the activities become routine or institutionalized and that student needs are anticipated and met by normal educational strategies.

The preparation of the educational programmer is more complex than is that of the two perspectives previously discussed. The required knowledge bases are broad, encompassing the philosophical, psychological, historical, and sociological foundations of education, the design of curriculum, the pedagogy of education, and the psychology of

learning. The intervention skills in this approach also are broad and demanding, including teaching, laboratory training, conflict management and negotiation skills, and administration. The scope of such preparation clearly goes beyond the traditional master's level.

***The Developmentalist.*** This perspective for practice holds that it is the result—not the means—of counseling that matters most. The aim of counseling is development, according to this approach, which may take many forms but which includes cognitive or intellectual growth and psychosocial or affective growth. The outcomes may take many conceptual forms, such as intellectual development, moral and ethical development, ego development, maturity, identity and self-concept, or career development. In any form, the developmental counselor's role is to seek to facilitate change in students precisely and predictably, basing interventions on knowledge of human development theory and research.

This perspective on practice in community college counseling may be even less operable than the educational programmer role. It is found infrequently, partly because the knowledge and skills needed to practice the role are very complex, and until now, only rarely have been a part of the pre-service preparation of community college counselors. It also may be more expensive and extensive than most present-day administrators will support. However, it may grow in use because it is theory-based and precise in its outcomes, making it an attractive approach from an accountability viewpoint.

In this approach, counselors identify problems or needs, define the problem in theoretical terms, assess the developmental status of students, focus on precise developmental and content goals, design specific interventions, execute the plans, and evaluate the outcomes. Thus, the preparation of counselors desiring to practice in this role necessarily must focus on knowledge of human development theory and research, organization development, psychometrics, and research. Intervention skills draw heavily from counseling, teaching, and consultation.

## General Preparation Concerns

Although common standards for preparation are far from reality in the student services profession, specific suggestions are available in several forms in the literature: the Council of Student Personnel Associations (COSPA) report (Cooper, 1975) and Pruitt (1979) offer suggestions for preparing a student development specialist; Hansen

(1978) addresses counselor preparation for career development/career education; Sweeney (1979) reviews preparation trends; Kohlberg (1975) explores a developmental approach; Conyne (1980) considers the community dimension of counseling; and Alcorn and Sturgis (1981) propose a model for counselor training for community agency needs. A very thorough treatment of preparation of student affairs professionals is presented in Knock (1977), which includes a specific chapter on preparing community college student personnel specialists (Matson, 1977). Finally, a current, thoughtful treatment appears in Delworth, Hanson, and Associates (1980), in which the authors discuss the structure of the profession as five interrelated components: relevant theory, history and philosophy, models of practice and role orientations, organizational and management models and competencies, and professional competencies. They go on to suggest specific courses appropriate to each structural component (Delworth, Hanson, and Associates, 1980, pp. 473–485).

While these discussions are very helpful in terms of gaining a general perspective on the preparation task (especially Knock and Delworth, Hanson, and Associates), they still leave the practical decisions for the counselor educator relatively untouched. Like the colleges ultimately to be served by graduates of the preparation programs, the universities normally do not have unlimited resources, either fiscal or human. These limitations, coupled with educator preferences or biases, mandate that decisions be made among the almost limitless options to form the primary thrust of the program.

Historically, college student personnel preparation programs have been characterized by their essential features, focused on counseling, administration, or development; occasionally, individual programs attempt to focus on research, especially at the doctoral level. Among these four traditional options for primary focus, the development thrust appears most promising for contemporary practice—especially for community college counselors—for several reasons: (1) it focuses on outcomes, rather than on means, of professional practice; (2) it is knowledge-bound, drawing heavily from relevant theory and research to dictate intervention characteristics; (3) it offers precision and predictability, thus emphasizing high levels of professionalism in practice; (4) it lends itself to institutional accountability demands, offering measurable outcomes in students rather than vague generalizations as its goals; and (5) it recognizes the interdependency of preparation and in-service education, giving each component opportunity to deal from positions of strength (knowledge and clinical supervision for prepa-

ration programs and sharpening of intervention skills for in-service education).

**Nurturing Professional Community College Counselors**

The overriding concern of in-service education is to enrich the extant knowledge base with new knowledge, with new findings of research, with specific institutionally based knowledge, and with experience, and to sharpen and extend intervention skills and competencies. A reexamination of values, attitudes, and beliefs occupies reoccurring ascendency in in-service education.

On the job, the community college counselor is subject to diverse pressures to serve the special interests of students, teachers, and administrators. Surveys of community college counseling programs show consistently that while their activities can be categorized similarly to other counseling settings, such as university counseling centers, the priorities given to the categories vary distinctively (Higgins, 1981; Miller, 1979; Wolf and Dameron, 1975). Frequently, almost half of community college counselors' time is devoted to academic advising, for example. An interesting observation by Higgins (1981) is illustrative of the state of the art. He muses that community college counseling programs appeared to have taken a very traditional approach to serve a very nontraditional student body! In-service education carries the burden of bridging the gap between institutional need and professional capability and between what is and what should be in professional practice.

In-service education programs for community college counselors may be characterized by the *source of need*—that is, whether the concern is motivated by institutional or professional interest—and by desired outcome of the training, focusing either on an extension of knowledge or on the sharpening of skills. Figure 2 displays these dimensions and suggests frequent content or topics of training associated with each quadrant.

***Institutionally Motivated Concerns.*** The professional employees of a college determine by their actions whether institutional goals are met. This dependence on the quality of employee dictates continuous in-service education programs as a way to ensure institutional capacity to meet goals consistently, even though institutional requirements may change frequently.

Executing the educational programs of the college with the highest quality demands knowledge by the professional of the historical

**Figure 2. Inservice Needs for Professional Community College Counselors**

| *Locus of Concern* | *Focus of Inservice Education* | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Extension of Knowledge Base* | *Refinement of Intervention Skills* |
| Institutionally-motivated Concerns | Nature of the college | Organization development interventions |
| | Institutional mission | Teaching, counseling, and administration |
| | Student characteristics | Referral networks |
| | Educational technology | Interinstitutional articulation |
| | Quality of work life | Institutional research |
| Professionally-motivated Concerns | Relevant theory | Alternative program designs |
| | Research findings | Teaching, counseling, and administration |
| | Models of practice | Learn new competencies |
| | Examine own values, attitudes, and beliefs | Life and career planning, self and others |

and current nature of the college, its place in the community, and what it is trying to accomplish. The professional needs to understand the college's mission, the policies by which it operates, its resource capabilities, and other contingencies dictated by external and internal forces. The nature of the clientele, what they want or need, what they care about, and how they envision the college's role in their lives moderate much of professional conduct and constitute a necessary knowledge base for optimal functioning. Keeping abreast of the tools of the trade also is essential and represents another institutionally motivated concern for continuous employee development. The institutionally driven concerns increasingly recognize the need to deal with the overall quality of life for professionals. Such needs are far-ranging and are beyond the scope of this chapter. Interested readers may wish to consult organization development authorities for detailed discussion of this topic (Huse, 1980).

Institutional concerns also encompass many skill-oriented topics. For example, improving routine skills of teaching, counseling, or administration is an ever-present concern. Learning new intervention skills, such as certain organization development strategies intended

to help cope with institutional change or research capabilities to help improve abilities for self-study, also are common institutional concerns.

***Professionally Motivated Concerns.*** The counseling profession is noted for its burgeoning knowledge base, especially in theory development, and for its innovative approaches to practice. Community college counselors, like their counterparts in instruction, constantly search for new information, new interpretations, new meaning, and new strategies in their jobs. Most look to the in-service education program to provide updating and expansion of knowledge and skills, such as improving knowledge and understanding of adult development, as distinguished from earlier forms. Sinick (1979) argues persuasively for the urgent need to include adult development knowledge in in-service education.

The types of self-motivated concerns shown in Figure 2 merely are illustrative of in-service needs for community college counselors, for they, like the students they serve, are a diverse lot with far-ranging interests and talents. They generally exhibit internal motivation to be better at what they do and in what they know; and, like all adults, they are developing and changing with increasing age. Their need to engage in life and career planning for themselves is particularly apparent, as many counselors seem to outgrow the confines of their work. Thus, in-service education programs can help professionals rediscover themselves and perhaps rechart their professional lives.

**In-Service Education State of the Art**

The methods of in-service education are as diverse as the technology of teaching itself. Institutional support, both tangible and intangible, varies considerably for in-service programs. Some programs may be mandated; others are voluntary. Some rewards for participation in in-service education may be in the form of increased salary or benefits; others are less substantive. What is most evident about in-service education in community colleges is its almost universal presence. Characterized by diversity, formal programs to promote continued development of professional counselors exist shoulder-to-shoulder with professional practice.

Since community college counseling is different from other counseling settings in some important ways, as shown throughout this chapter, it falls to the in-service education programs to foster the most targeted, perhaps the most relevant, knowledge and skills updating

required by counselors. Pre-service programs rarely are possessed of the convenience of students with singular career goals; thus, they often stress those content areas generic to all forms of counseling, leaving the indigenous requirements of a particular setting to the professional or to those responsible for in-service education. The burden of this responsibility cannot be overstated. The requirements for counseling knowledge and skill in most community colleges are extensive, going well beyond what most preparation programs can accomplish in a typical master's degree program. Once on the job, many community college counselors find it inconvenient or impossible to return to the graduate school for further preparation. Only those aspiring to leadership roles may be driven by external necessity to return for further training, leaving behind those who need more knowledge and skill in order to perform optimally but who cannot or will not return to graduate school but look to the in-service program for help.

## Summary

Built on an assumption of sufficient difference between counselors in community colleges and those who work elsewhere, this chapter focused on varied views of community college counseling practice from a perspective of the counselor educator. First presenting the premise of pre-service preparation so as to distinguish it clearly from in-service education, the discussion centered on the roles and functions of four reasonably distinct perspectives on practice in community college counseling: the educational generalist, the counselor/community agent, the educational programmer, and the developmentalist. Variation in preparation content then was shown to be associated with the respective perspectives.

From an articulated premise of in-service education, the discussion then reviewed knowledge base and intervention skill development options for both institutionally and self-motivated concerns of community college counselors.

Graduate preparation and continued growth on the job are interrelated aspects of professional development of counselors. Some pre-service, graduate-level preparation normally precedes on-the-job experience; but, following this initial sequence, the linear character of the two aspects is irrelevant. Each aspect represents an indispensable component of professional life.

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*In response to social change and budget reduction, community college counseling programs will inevitably change. Full implementation of student development concepts will involve integrated organizations that foster human growth.*

# *Organizational Alternatives for the Future of Student Development*

*Robert B. Young*

Social change: The topic is as important as it is popular in the literature of higher education. Even the casual reader is aware of the impact of social change on colleges and universities. From the spirited sixties to the strident seventies, through the edgy eighties, and into the unknown nineties, this impact has prefaced our understanding of the issues and evolution of higher education.

This chapter begins with a familar preface. Social change has almost overwhelmed the evolution of community colleges and student development. It dominates the present, and it will mark the future. Twenty years ago, the community college flowered with Camelot optimism. It prospered with "baby-boom" students, new campuses, and generous local bond revenues. Ten years ago, student development emerged from the ashes of the 1960s. It responded to the social questions of the 1970s—about the primacy of people or institutions and about the provision of different types of education in the land of equal opportunity.

A. S. Thurston, W. A. Robbins (Eds.). *Counseling: A Crucial Function for the 1980s.* New Directions for Community Colleges, no. 43. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, September 1983.



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The demographic and economic conditions of society dominate community college education in the 1980s (Graybeal, 1981). Students and staffs are older. The former need to enroll and the latter need to rejuvenate in order for the college to prosper. Funds for the community college education have dried up, and showers are not predicted until a new bulge of young students can matriculate in the 1990s. Until then "educational institutions will be faced with reduction-in-force activity and considerable belt tightening. One of the first staffing areas to be examined critically when determining funding priorities [will be the] non-instructional counseling department" (Hughes, 1976, p. 29).

A study of the projected effects of social change on forty-two four-year colleges "indicated that traditional counseling programs and services may change as a result of enrollment and budget reduction. Personal, individual, and non-academic counseling programs and satellite and outreach counseling centers represent areas that would probably be reduced if enrollment and budget reductions are encountered" (Nelson and Murphy, 1980, p. 8). The same fate might await community college counseling programs.

Changes are inevitable for community college counseling programs. Some changes will be evolutionary; some will be revolutionary. Some will be led by theoretical constructs; others will teach theory a thing or two. The purpose of this chapter is to consider a few changes that might take place in community college counseling in the coming years. The evolution of student development concepts will be discussed. Also, this chapter will examine two alternative structures for the organization of student development programs in community colleges. This examination will include some reasons for the development of the alternatives, the operational implications of each model, and the advantages and disadvantages of these models for community college counseling programs.

## The Future of Student Development

*Student development* is a modern label for evolutionary concepts of human development. Its tradition stretches back for at least a decade and perhaps as far back as the 1937 book *Student Personnel Point of View* (see Jones, 1978). In the past five years, its concepts have incorporated the development of older college students, as well as adolescents. While the 1976 volume *The Future of Student Affairs* (Miller and Prince, 1976) contains no direct discussion of adult learning, *The Modern American College,* published in 1981, proclaims that "the responsibility of college [is]

adult development throughout the life cycle" (Chickering and Associates, 1981, p. xx).

Student development today is a primary preoccupation of student services in community colleges. Its concepts permeate the literature of the field. Its terms are found on office doors and in collective bargaining contracts for student development specialists. It influences the functions that practitioners want to perform. In a survey of 435 counselors and administrators in Florida community colleges, Jonassen and Stripling determined that "functions such as student counseling, career information and decision making, and student development, which focus on the growth and development of students, were at the top of [their program priorities for the 1980s], whereas social and academic regulation were rated near the bottom" of these priorities (1977, p. 85).

The appeal of student development concepts, terms, and functions is very significant; yet it does not measure the full implementation of that theory in community colleges. Another measure is organizational change, which reveals the extent to which a major intent of student development has been fulfilled: the creation of integrated organizations that foster human growth. Some writers contend that student development has not been fully successful in affecting those environments of growth.

Plato believes that student affairs personnel have accepted the words of change—student development—but not the full responsibilities of change. They have not debated "the merits of this particular approach [or examined] the means that this profession uses to legitimize it." In Plato's opinion, student development has reached its "status by acclaim rather than testing...[and] it gives the appearance of change without being radically different from what currently exists.... Actual responsibility or duty changes [have not been] really very different" (Plato, 1978, pp. 34–35).

In a review of student development presentations at the 1976 APGA convention, Kuh (1977) discovered a lack of theoretical substance and program innovations. Only four presentations appeared to integrate student development theory with program design.

In a study of 150 university vice-presidents of student affairs, Gamsky and Oleshansky (1980) discovered that their implementation of developmental functions was correlated with their support of student philosophy or their lack of support for nondevelopmental functions. These conclusions confirmed their earlier finding that the espousal of developmental theory was inconsistent with the initiation of student development programs.

Blaesser believes that organizational change is essential to the success of student development. Without organizational development, "the ambiguities in the movement, a rather diffuse conceptual base, declining enrollment and financial support, cries for accountability, the trend toward faculty unionization, the actions of student leaders in trying for separatism within the system—these and other pressures make the student development movement a minor force [despite its promise for two-year and four-year institutions] at this time" (1978, p. 111).

The remainder of this chapter explores two organizational alternatives for counseling (and other developmental functions) in community colleges. The models emerge from the character of the times and the advancement of psychological theory. They do not reflect a failure of student development as much as its ineluctable evolution. The goals of these models are mostly the goals of earlier theory; only their means of attaining these goals are different. The models are sketched rather than colored, because of the limits of space. They are, respectively, community-based and human resource alternatives to community college counseling.

## The Community-Based Alternative

A community-based program might also be labeled continuing education, lifelong learning, community service, or adult-based counseling. In general, community-based programming seems to be the only other area of the community college that has as many different titles as student development, affairs, personnel, or services. Still, its thrust is consistent: to improve the community through the development of its members across the life-cycle. At the least, community-based services provide the sociological analogue to psychological student development, the noninstitutional equivalent to institutionally based student affairs programs.

***Reasons for Development.*** Four reasons support the development of community-based counseling: the rhetorical evolution of the community-based college; the factual primacy of adult enrollments; funding concerns; and the interests of community college counselors.

The community mission of the community college shares a similar history with student development. It has been long-lived but has only recently become prominent. Vaughan (1981) traces the mission from the writings of Koos and Eells in the early 1930s through two works in 1969, *The Community Dimension of the Community College* and *Community Service in the Community College.* Gollattscheck contends that

"1974 is the year that the philosophy of community-based education became clearly articulated, and the movement gained significant momentum" (1977, p. 1). In a 1980 speech to the National Combase Conference, Gleazer proposed "a broad statement of community college mission: To encourage and facilitate lifelong learning with community as process and product. The community is perceived as campus, classroom, and laboratory and community behavior is experience which can result in learning. The sought-for outcome is an improved sense of community" (1981, p. 9).

This rhetoric glows with the promise of an ideal *community* college, but questions can be raised about its substance beneath the shine. Two facts of community college education seem to support community-based efforts as much as their ideal: the primacy of adult enrollments in community colleges today and the need for pay-as-you-go policies for many college services.

The community-based ideal emphasizes programs and services for adults in community colleges. Perhaps it is even an inducement for adults to use the services of the college. Cohen (1977) says "that may not be the rationale for community education, but it certainly seems to fit its purpose." Without adult students, enrollment might decline 15 percent; with them, it might increase 2 to 3 percent (Breneman and Nelson, 1981). Adult programming is significant for the development and, perhaps, for the survival of the community college.

The interest in community-based education comes while general funds are being cut and general fees are being questioned. Proposition 13, Proposition 2½, and other legislation have slashed state funds directly, and local services, such as counseling, indirectly. In addition, adult students have become aware of their consumer rights and responsibilities. They oppose general fees that don't provide specific benefits, and they avoid extra expenses that might be paid by full-time students. As a result of propositionism and consumerism, fees usually have to be charged for specific adult services. These fees have led the way in community-based education, and their path is headed toward all student services.

Finally, community-based activities consume 12 percent of the work of community college counselors today (Hughes, 1976). They also include some of the most important current and future responsibilities of these counselors (Litwak, 1978). A community-based model would confirm and expand such activities on behalf of students, the college, and the community.

***Operational Characteristics.*** A community-based counseling pro-

gram would have some of the following operational characteristics. First, most of its staff would work part-time for the college. Already, many community colleges use part-time counseling personnel (Miller, 1979), but their numbers would increase dramatically in a community-based program. These staff members might be employed part-time by other community service agencies. They might also include more minorities and women than are currently employed in community colleges (Bushnell, 1973), since much of their work would include outreach and peer counseling.

The new staff would be supported by fees-for-services. These fees reflect the traditions of both private counseling practice and community-based services in community colleges. The International Association of Counseling Services (1982) states that such fees would have to be evaluated, but they do not automatically jeopardize the accreditation of counseling programs in community colleges.

These fees stimulate the development and elimination of programs on the basis of their popularity. Accurate needs assessments would be essential. Community-based counseling would become more egalitarian than traditional counseling because of the financial dependence of counselors on the needs of their clients. Counseling facades might suffer as new foundations were built, and impressions of assistance might have to yield to measures of impact in order to promote the purchase of counseling services.

Community-based counselors would be aligned with the community education division of the college, either formally or informally. Workshops, courses, and other services would be offered through this division more than through the offices of the academic dean. Heavilin (1978) contends that the academic dean is the primary opponent of instruction by student affairs staff in community colleges. Community-based instruction would bypass such opposition and, therefore, it might prosper.

Community-based counseling would also be closely affiliated with local agencies. The mutual employment of counselors would aid this affiliation. In addition, fees-for-services encourage the coordination, not the duplication, of offerings. Community college counselors might become the coordinators, as well as the providers, of services in the community.

***Advantages and Disadvantages.*** Community-based counseling provides an organizational structure for adult student development. Its sociological thrust stimulates staff beyond an isolated psychology. For many, it might augur increased social concern. The specific fee system

enables counseling departments to hire new staff to do new things in new places at new times. It also enables programmatic speculation with little financial risk; programs can be created and dismantled easily. The fee structure also enables adult consumers to determine the longevity of services. Thus, counseling services are more egalitarian in nature.

The fee structure also dictates that those who can afford services are able to receive them. It reinforces an elitist characteristic of adult student enrollments: them that's got, gets more. It can inhibit the continuity of programs that are unpopular but socially important. Also, new staff members—minorities and women—might feel disadvantaged because they do not have the legal and political advantages of full-time employment. Their full-time counterparts might resent the requirements of community-based changes, or they might be unable to participate in community-based counseling because of contractual limitations. Finally, the affiliation with community-based education might be important, but it is not filled with prestige for community college counselors. In a national survey of community college presidents, Young and Rue discovered that the status of community education and services was superior to only one other function in the community college: student affairs (1981).

**A Human Resources Development Model**

Developmental psychology has moved in two directions in recent years: into adulthood and across the boundaries of human organizations. The former movement has benefitted the counseling of adult students in community colleges. It might be fulfilled through a "community-based" organization. The latter movement is significant for the development of the entire college. Its embodiment is a human resources development model of counseling—an organization that advances the concepts of student development through integrated services for the faculty, staff, and students of the college. This model transforms many of the functions, but not the essential developmental tradition of student services.

***Reasons for Development.*** The demographics and economics of society have boosted the evolution of organizational psychology. New concepts of administrative structure and human productivity have interested all American institutions, including community colleges. These concepts have also interested student development practitioners. Administration has been labelled "milieu management," in order to suggest the development of an integrated learning environment. Coun-

seling has become "consultation," in order to incorporate activities that relate to the operations of the college more than to direct student assistance (Rademacher, May, and Throckmorton, 1980). Even the acronymic cousins—MBO, PPBS, ZBB—are not alien concepts to student development in community colleges, even if they are still uncomfortable practices for many (Berman, 1978).

New concepts about productivity are central to the adoption of a human resource model of counseling. In the past few years, Japanese management has been studied carefully because of its approach to employee productivity. For the past decade, staff productivity has been the subject of considerable discussion in community colleges.

In *Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge*, Ouchi (1981) contrasts Japanese and American organizations. The former employ life-long workers, who are evaluated and promoted slowly, who tread nonspecialized career paths, and whose individual development and collective input are vital the the success of the enterprise. American organizations are generally less stable, more specialized, and more individualized.

The success of the Japanese organization is centered in its people. Therefore, it prizes people-centered professionals, such as counselors. Counseling might play an important role in the lives of Japanese workers. Japanese management seems to boost holistic individual counseling as a corporate end and group facilitation as a corporate means for greater effectiveness.

The Japanese concepts are applicable to American organizations that have little economic growth or individual mobility. Employees are staying put; thus, their personal needs are becoming more important to American organizations than they were in former years. Their lives have become an important aspect of corporate productivity. "The bottom line is clear: humanism and productivity are not incompatible. We can no longer squander our human resources. . . We must discover how to design organizations and technological systems in such a way that individual talents are used to the maximum, and human satisfaction and dignity are preserved. We must learn to make technology serve man not only in the end product, but in the doing" (Karlins, 1981, p. 21).

Since the publication of *Teachers for Tomorrow* (O'Banion, 1972), staff productivity has been an important concern in community colleges. Staff productivity will continue to be an issue during the next decade because of the limited mobility of "baby boom" professionals (Bender, 1980) and because the increased productivity of employees is

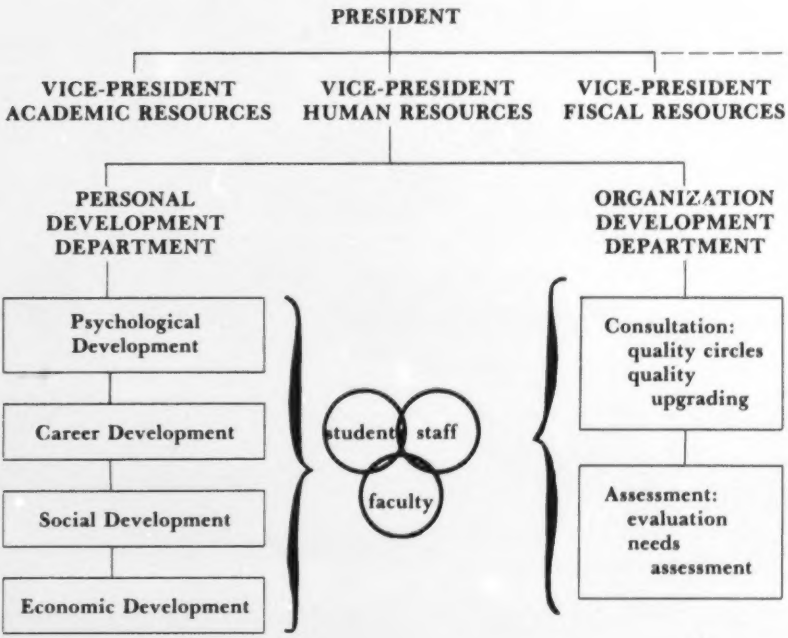
the least inflationary means for genuine economic growth at the college (Breneman and Nelson, 1981).

Community college counselors can increase staff productivity in their colleges. Their training fits the ends and means of the Japanese model. Their experience with adult college students can be transposed to adult college employees. Community college counselors are also interested in the organizational aspects of human development. In the Florida study (Jonassen and Stripling, 1977) of priorities for the future, administrative organization, faculty consultation, in-service education, and change agency appeared among the top ten priorities for student affairs programs in community colleges. Litwak (1978) confirms that in-service training and consulting with faculty and administrators are two of the top responsibilities that community college counselors should expect in the future.

***Operational Characteristics.*** The human resource development model would combine all of the personnel functions of the college: student personnel, traditional staff personnel, and faculty development activities. Human needs would be seen as more similar than dissimilar; thus, any artificial distinctions among offices would be eliminated. Personal counseling, financial counseling, career counseling, and other types of development assistance would be provided to employees and students from a centrally administered office. The same office would control the records and evaluate the productivity of all of the people of the college. Thus, it would also provide the traditional regulatory or maintenance functions of student and staff personnel offices.

Figure 1 diagrams the potential organization of a human resource development division. The vice-president for human resources supplants the chief student affairs officer as the equal of the vice-presidents of academic resources and fiscal resources. The Division of Human Resources includes two major departments: personal development and organizational development. The first department attempts to enrich the psychological, economic, social, and career lives of students and staff. In Japanese management, these are the "soft" elements of the organization that are as vital as the "hard" elements of structure and strategy (Pascale and Athos, 1982). This department includes counselors, administrators, and instructors in each office of concern. The organizational development department would provide assessments of general needs and individual productivity. It would also provide consultation services, such as the facilitation of quality circles for student and staff input and quality upgrading—assistance in the resolution of specific problems in departments and classrooms (White, 1981).

**Figure 1. A Human Resource Development Model**




The human resource development agency is externally and internally interdependent. Young and Harris (1977) have proposed an interdependent model of community college counseling that affects the systems and psychology of the entire campus. The human resource model incorporates traditional academic, business, and student personnel functions in order to create an integrated human development environment. Internally, it is also independent. Counseling staff would rotate among the financial, career, psychological, and socially oriented functions of personal development. They would also rotate among the consultation and assessment offices of organization development. Specializations would be deemphasized in the human resource development model, and so would centralized functions. Counseling centers and personnel offices would give way to human development clusters throughout the college. The clusters would yield more effective consultation services and more accessible counseling opportunities for students and staff.

***Advantages and Disadvantages.*** The human resource development model provides a revolutionary structure for the implementation

of evolutionary concepts of human development. Its interdependent characteristics bring counselors into the mainstream of the college, primarily by offering their traditional skills to new populations. The college benefits from the consolidation of separate functions under one administrative heading, which improves the prominence and power of human development concerns at the college. The consolidation might also broaden the institution's commitment to the traditional, student-centered functions of human development offices (Jones, 1978).

The human resource model also meets the corporate needs of the times. It acknowledges the impact of aging and economics on the community college. It attempts to boost human productivity through means that are becoming accepted by Western industry. Those means are new to industry, but they are familiar to counseling. Their faddishness might revitalize the prominence of counseling in the community college.

The human resource development model appeals to many counselors. It includes activities that they *want* to do. It also seems to include activities that they *can* do. Jonassen and Stripling indicate that the ACES standards for counselor preparation are harmonious with the organizational development interests of community college counselors (1977). Finally, the human resource development model includes activities that counselors *should* do, both for the benefit of the organization and for their own professional rejuvenation. Counselors need new assignments (Bender, 1980), and perhaps new clienteles, in order to become more productive in the community college in the future.

The disadvantages of the model lie in the immensity and tone of its implementation. "It is easier to move a cemetery than to achieve a change of any significance in a college" is an axiom of higher education administration (Blaesser, 1978, p. 111). The human resource development model requires morally strong or fiscally desperate leadership in order to be implemented at the college level. Within the model, strong leadership has to help counselors perform or accept the new duties of human and organizational development. Some training in consultation might be necessary (Young and Harris, 1977). The psychological intransigence of some counselors might have to be overcome. Also, some contractual obstacles might have to be hurdled in order to implement the new responsibilities.

The human resource development model also appears foreign to community college counselors because of its business and international appeal. Counselors have often resisted the intrusion of business concepts and strategies in their work. For example, Berman (1978)

charges that MBO is ineffective in most community college student affairs offices because of the counseling education, ethics, and personalities of many practitioners. Of equal concern is the acceptance and application of a Japanese approach to management in the American community college. The attractiveness of *Theory Z* is tempered by the ritualism, agism, sexism, and collectivism of Japanese business practices (Ouchi, 1981). These negative aspects of Japanese organizations need to be weighed before they are pocketed by American colleges.

Finally, the human resource development model brings increased responsibility without the promise of increased prestige to community college counselors. Shoemer and Snapp (1977) note that student affairs functions are not primary but support services in the NCHEMS classification of college activities. Similar support services include the staff personnel functions that would constitute a major component of the human resource office.

**Forecasting the Future**

Humor, as much as sincerity, should characterize our predictions of the future. The opportunities to be right are overwhelmed by the probabilities of error. The times are revolutionary as well as evolutionary, and catastrophe is just the push of a button away.

Evolution still prevails, however, and its prevalence encourages the attempt to forecast the future. Thurston (1972) correctly predicted the evolution of the issues of older students, tight budgets, and in-service training in "the decade ahead" for student development in community colleges. These issues have evolved during the past ten years, and so has the theory of student development that supports them--from the concerns of adolescents to those of adults and organizations.

The evolution of society and psychology will continue, and with it the need for community colleges to create new human development practices. Today, some critics argue that student affairs organizations have not evolved as fully as their psychological theory. They contend that substantial organizational change is necessary to fulfill that evolution. The demographics and economics of society also encourage changes that corporealize the concepts of student development theory.

This chapter has explored two alternatives for the organization of community college counseling in the future. It is unlikely that either alternative will soon appear as an organizational totality. Appendages will emerge before the body of community-based counseling or human resource development is formed. Mutant forms will evolve to meet the needs of individual institutions.

This author enjoys the excitement and opportunity of the human resource development model of counseling. It provides an integrated approach to staff, student, and organizational development that is palatable to both the "hard" and "soft" concerns of the community college. However, the model requires financial support and presidential leadership in order to be implemented. It will probably appear first, if at all, at a few wealthier, managerially chic, suburban community colleges, despite its importance to all community colleges.

The community-based model is easier to implement. It encourages innovation and employment with little financial risk. In an older, poorer society, this model might provide the major means for the development of community college counseling. It seems a shame that its economics will probably subsume its considerations of community development. But what has been true for all other community education activities in the community college should remain constant for its student development activities.

The community-based model of counseling and its human resource alternative are more debatable than definite models for the future of community college student development. Their means are probably more moot than their ends. While the debate about those means progresses, the evolution of society and psychology will continue to demand the implementation of new structures for human and organizational development in the community college. The debate cannot deter action.

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*Societal transitions and shrinking resources are profoundly affecting community college counseling. Survival will mean creative use of change to help colleges adopt human development as their unifying purpose.*

# *The Decade Ahead for Community College Counseling*

*Alice S. Thurston*

In 1972, when *Student Development Programs in the Community Junior College* was published (see Thurston, 1972), the last chapter peered into "The Decade Ahead." The future of counseling was of prime concern as the focal point. With warnings of hard realities to come, student personnel professionals were told they could "continue as they [were], their services generally perceived as of little value. In time they [would] probably disappear quietly from the scene, pushed out by the new instructional technologies and higher budget priorities. Or they [could] make meaningful contributions to the lives of students, by their being as well as by their actions, and thereby become an indispensable part of the educational process" (Thurston, 1972, p. 223).

While instructional technologies never became a threat, the impact of budget priorities on community college counseling has become increasingly apparent. Have counselors made sufficiently meaningful and demonstrable contributions to the lives of students to become indispensable? Or will they quietly disappear from the scene, later to be reinvented in other forms in another era? This decade will tell the story.

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A. S. Thurston, W. A. Robbins (Eds.). *Counseling: A Crucial Function for the 1980s*. New Directions for Community Colleges, no. 43. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, September 1983.

In a similar vein, Matson told a group of student personnel specialists that "some remodeling—and it may be drastic rebuilding—is in order if our profession is to survive" (1968, p. 20).

**The Impact of Shrinking Resources**

The financial crisis in higher education is likely to continue in the foreseeable future. A recent headline in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* read, "EDUCATION OFFICIALS IN 3 STATES SEE HARDER TIMES FOR REST OF 1980'S (McCurdy, 1982). Economists Breneman and Nelson, in a Brookings Institution publication on financing community colleges, explored the future of community colleges in the light of economic trends, public support, and educational decisions by the colleges themselves. Their optimistic scenario assumes a growing demand for services, continued political support, cost-effective programs, and a favorable financial situation based on a growing economy. The pessimistic scenario is the reverse, involving eroding enrollment and decreased support from taxpayers unwilling to pay for lifelong learning and remedial education. The authors conclude: "The future of community colleges is hard to predict because the range of choice of what to emphasize and what to become is wider than for other institutions" (Breneman and Nelson, 1981, p. 20). As community colleges review their range of choices in order to solve their financial problems, will they choose to support counseling services?

Counseling and guidance have been deeply rooted in community college philosophy and mission. What may be a bellringer of the times is contained in a working draft of a Statement of Mission and Statewide Priorities by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. Mission is defined in terms of access, pretransfer education, preparation for employment, and continuing and community education. The only mention of counseling and guidance appears under the remedial function, which would include "guidance, probation and counseling to help students in academic needs (California Community Colleges Board of Governors, 1982, p. 3). It begins to sound as though the roots were not as deep as we had always assumed!

**The Need for Change**

Counselors need to give particular attention to building a professional image. No one seems to be quite sure what counselors do or *should* do (including counselors themselves). Certainly most faculty are

unclear about counseling as distinguished from faculty advising or even from listening to a troubled student and then giving advice. Some students apparently associate going to see a counselor with going to the high school principal's office because they were in trouble. In the Los Amigos system, students were overheard bragging, "I made it clear through the system and never saw a counselor." In the same study, administrators gave lip service to the need for counseling but in practice gave it low priority. Robbins (Chapter One) argues persuasively that counselors themselves must have a strong base in theory, a clear sense of purpose, and a visible system through which the purpose is being implemented.

There was less urgency for change in the seventies. Counseling was a generally accepted function of the community college. With adequate financing, no aspect of the college was under close scrutiny. Counselors said, "Why should we change? We see lots of students and we help them." However, faculty did not always agree, administrators were preoccupied with managing growth, and the critics whom Robbins cites were largely ignored.

Community college trustees and educational leaders are aware of their increasingly diverse student populations—people of all ages at differing life stages, with differing needs and concerns; students with various disabilities; increasing numbers of disturbed students who reflect societal tensions and dislocations; and those with diverse cultural backgrounds. Student growth needs clearly extend beyond the classroom. Yet counseling staff are being reduced and administrative reorganizations made in which student personnel services are given low priority. There is an urgency in getting on with the process of remodeling and rebuilding. The various contributors to this sourcebook suggest ways in which change can take place. Survival is the game for every program and every service. Counseling is no exception; to survive will require change.

## Rebuilding for the Eighties

***Emerging Trends.*** In May 1982, staff of the Center for the Study of Community Colleges conducted a telephone survey of counseling services in thirty-four community colleges in six districts, to learn what strategies are used to encourage students to enroll in transfer programs and progress toward their degrees. Most of the colleges reported establishing college-high school links; use of placement or

academic counseling services; orientation of new students; use of faculty advisers either on a structured or a voluntary, informal basis; career counseling; and job placement. A few, most notably Miami-Dade, are monitoring student progress using an "academic alert" system; some have developed links with four-year colleges and universities; a few are doing follow-up research on student success after transfer or job placement. There was no attempt to evaluate the quality of these services or their impact on students ("Counseling Services. . . , 1982).

"Do more with less" seems to be the new buzz phrase in community colleges. To implement this admonition by working harder and longer in order not to sacrifice present functions could bring, at worst, disaster, and, at best, counselor burn-out. Either way, students would be the losers. A more productive alternative would be to analyze students' needs (not just infer them, as often happens) and then make priority decisions as to what can be done well within the resources available. The process of identifying and prioritizing needs could provide the opportunity for synergistic team work described by Dassance and Tulloch (Chapter Four). Working through the process with colleagues from other areas of the college could help counselors focus on functions felt to contribute most to the educational progress of students and at the same time avoid administrative assignments to noncounseling functions.

The back-to-basics movement appears to permeate all levels of education. It is quite possible that within the next few years recent high school graduates will enter the community colleges better prepared and more ready to make the sophisticated academic and career choices appropriate in a post-industrial society. In other words, the "new student" of the future will no longer be the nontraditional student with deficiencies in academic skills but the student who already knows how to read, write, and handle at least beginning mathematics. Just as counselors developed functions to serve the new students of the seventies, they will need to develop ways of working with the new students of the eighties.

***New Roles.*** "Efforts to describe the role of the counselor in terms of tasks performed at any given moment or in a restricted geographical setting are too limiting to be of real value," Matson writes (Chapter Two). In fact, functional definitions may actually stifle the creativity that will be needed in the years ahead.

Counselors will be needed more than ever, but they must be ready to take on new roles. Historically, counseling in community colleges has been based on the voluntary, one-to-one, jack-of-all-trades, atheoretical model that Creamer (Chapter Seven) calls the "educational

generalist." More recently, there has been an infusion of Creamer's counselor/service or social approach. The newer, more promising, but more complicated model is that of the developmentalist, in which counselors make use of developmental research on human growth. Robbins (Chapter One) calls for incorporating this developmental perspective in the community college counselor's approach.

Developmental counseling is pro-active and interventionist. It takes place in a systematic framework of consultation based on pre-assessment, advising, and periodic progress evaluation. It is theory-based. It rejects the voluntary collection of cafeteria-type services counselors adopted in the sixties; in a sense it represents a return to the fifties, when students were actively assisted in program and course choices and in evaluating their progress. Transfers, students in vocational programs, returnees seeking training for second careers, and all those who look to the community college for upward mobility need this kind of specific, structured, ongoing assistance. Schinoff (Chapter Five) describes how counselors at Miami-Dade are addressing these problems.

Matson discusses operational roles of counselors; they are educators, consultants, and milieu managers. Their relationship roles with students, instructional staff, administration, and community also are examined. Relationship roles often involve teamwork to implement student development strategies. Dassance and Tulloch concentrate, in their chapter, on how team efforts can result in synergism or a total effect greater than the sum of two effects taken separately (Chapter Four). Counselors have much to contribute in working as team members with others in the college to solve community college problems in the eighties in ways that encourage multi-faceted student growth. Synergistic teamwork between counselors and faculty will be needed to meet Moore's challenge: to help students become intellectually and emotionally tough (Chapter Three).

Matson (Chapter Two) and others emphasize milieu management as an important operational goal. Counselors have unique opportunities to sense aspects of the college environment that are detrimental to student development and the responsibility of working effectively with others to bring about positive change in curriculum design, instructional strategies, and areas of stress. Historically, as Matson points out, intervention strategies have been directed at modifying or redirecting student behavior to make it more compatible with the college milieu. Campus ecology as a concept focuses attention on the college environment as it affects students.

Accountability is a theme that runs through the various chapters. It is an important element in the Miami-Dade system Schinoff (Chapter Five) describes. In its simplest terms, accountability is accounting for resources provided in order to increase program effectiveness and program credibility. A systematic approach to data collection and interpretation provides a basis for decision making, not only by administrators but also by staff itself. It builds on clear departmental policy and basic program thrust.

Cohen, in *The Modern American College*, talks about human service as a holistic approach to people and society, with the basic concept of empowerment, "the ability of people to manage their lives, to recognize and meet their needs, and to fulfill their potential as creative, responsible, and productive members of society" (Cohen, 1981, p. 514). Accountability standards concentrate on outcomes—on movement toward empowerment, which in the ultimate sense, is the objective of counseling. Accountability can begin with logging student contacts and describing the counseling system, but it ultimately must evaluate in measurable empowerment terms the impact on students.

***What the Colleges Can Do.*** Community college counselor training in the universities too often has been based on the assumption that counseling is counseling, regardless of the setting. Creamer emphasizes that community college counselor roles are sufficiently different from roles in other colleges to merit separate preparation. Counselor education needs to respond to the special training requirements of counselors in community colleges, both during their initial training and in their continuing education.

At present, counselor backgrounds are diverse; counselors are specialists in marriage and family counseling, clinical and counseling psychologists, graduates of programs focused on psychological counseling, and generalists from the classroom. To help counselors adopt new roles and sharpen their foci, community colleges must encourage and provide resources for staff development. Counselors also need help in keeping up with the state of the art, including the use of new technologies. Multi-college systems like Los Amigos should provide central staff direction and assistance.

Organizational structures are under review. It is important that reorganizations be based on philosophy as well as on pragmatic budget reductions in order to facilitate the cognitive *and* affective growth of students; structures that place the primary emphasis on instruction to the neglect of other aspects of development will turn back the educational

clock at least fifty years and deny the many human needs of community college students.

Young (Chapter Eight) presents two challenging models for the reorganization of student development programs—models of integrated organizations that would foster human growth. The human resources model he proposes would extend student development concepts to all members of the college community by combining personnel functions for both students and staff.

## The Tasks Ahead

In the months and years ahead, the fate of community college counseling will be determined not only by budget retrenchment, but also by actions of counselors themselves: by the decisions they make in terms of basic mission and priorities, by the relationships they build with other staff of the college, by the extent to which they broaden their competencies through staff development. Survival and professional growth will also depend on appropriate use of paraprofessionals and new technologies; systematic approaches to helping students make wise choices of courses, programs, and career goals; and accountability for what they do. To repeat Chickering's words: "There is room for increased hope, because our understanding of human development, of the conditions that encourage and retard it, and of the impacts of varied institutional arrangements and human interactions, has increased dramatically in the last forty years" (1981, p. 5).

To survive the decade ahead means taking on new roles and new points of view. The need for change is urgent; the need for effective counseling in community colleges is more critical than ever. Being a good generalist is not enough, just as concern for students is not enough.

The future is never pre-determined. While it will be shaped to some extent by forces beyond our control, in the final analysis it is determined by the choices we make. Counselors can still shape their future; the time to begin is now.

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*Further resources from the ERIC system provide additional information on counseling and academic advisement in community and junior colleges.*

# *Sources and Information: Counseling and Academic Advisement*

*Jim Palmer*

This concluding chapter provides an annotated bibliography of recent Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) documents and journal articles dealing with counseling and academic advisement at two-year colleges. The citations included in the bibliography were selected from the results of a computer search of the ERIC database.

The bibliography is organized into six sections. The first of these cites sources of information about the current status of counseling and advising in community college systems. The second section deals with various approaches to managing and delivering counseling services. The third section cites documents and articles focusing on counseling services for academically underprepared students. The fourth section provides citations on counseling services for students who intend to transfer to four-year institutions. Counseling and guidance for women, minorities, and other special populations are covered in section five. Finally, section six cites two documents that examine methods of evaluating counseling staff.

A. S. Thurston, W. A. Robbins (Eds.). *Counseling: A Crucial Function for the 1980s.* New Directions for Community Colleges, no. 43. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, September 1983.

The ERIC documents (ED numbers) listed here, unless otherwise indicated, are available on microfiche or in paper copy from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), Computer Microfilm International Corporation, P.O. Box 190, Arlington, VA 22210. The microfiche price for documents under 481 pages is $0.91. Prices for paper copies are: 1–25 pages, $2.15; 26–50 pages, $3.90; 51–75 pages, $5.65; and 76–100 pages $7.40; for each additional 25 pages, add $1.75. These prices are subject to change. Postage must be added to all orders. Abstracts of these and other documents in the junior college collection are available upon request from the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, 8118 Math-Sciences Building, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

**Status of Community College Counseling and Advising Services**

Henry, P. N. "A Survey of Counseling Centers at Public Community Colleges in New Mexico, Nevada, and Arizona." Unpublished paper, 1981. 13 pp. (ED 213 465).

Details methodology and findings of a study of the counseling centers of public community colleges in the Southwest to determine the characteristics and duties of counseling personnel, the types of services provided, and counselors' perceptions of students' most prevalent concerns.

Higgins, E. B. "Community College Counseling Centers: Structure and Focus." *Community College Review,* 1981, *9* (1), 18–23.

Describes the methodology and findings of a survey of 180 two-year colleges to determine the current practices and services of two-year college counseling programs. Presents findings based on 116 responses in terms of staff characteristics, administrative issues, and focus of the counseling services.

Higgins, E. B., and McEwen, M. K. "Counseling Services at Community Colleges in the Southeast." *Southern College Personnel Association Journal,* 1982, *4* (1), 52–60.

Examines a survey of representative counseling programs at community/junior colleges in the Southeast to determine current practices and services. Results suggested that the average counseling center would be staffed by one to three professional counselors and one or two clerical personnel and would serve about one-third of the student body.

Hines, E. R., Krause, P., and Endieveri, F. J. "Academic Advising in Two-Year Colleges." *Community/Junior College Research Quarterly,* 1980, *4* (2), 151–167.

Reports on a survey conducted in 1978 to examine the state of academic advisement at the fifty-eight two-year colleges in New York. Survey data are analyzed to determine the various types of academic advisement systems employed at colleges and to ascertain their effects on academic achievement.

*Status Survey of Guidance and Counseling Services in Michigan Community Colleges.* Berkeley, Mich.: Instructional Development and Evaluation Associates, 1981. 127 pp. (ED 215 714).

Examines a study conducted to examine counseling and guidance services at Michigan's twenty-nine community colleges. Study findings relate to types of services offered, job placement activities, counselor and adviser responsibilities, sources of career information for students, professional development for guidance personnel, occupational skills needs assessment, articulation agreements, promotional activities, and other factors.

**Management and Delivery of Counseling Services**

Anandam, K., and DeGregorio, E. (Comps.). *Promises to Keep---Academic Alert and Advisement (and) Statistics for the Winter Term, 1981–82.* Miami, Fla.: Miami-Dade Community College, 1981. 19 pp. (ED 215 726).

Summarizes a process by which students receive information on their academic performance and attendance through the Response System with Variable Prescriptions (RSVP), a computer system capable of generating 26,878 different letters based on information provided by instructors and on other student information, such as credit load and previous performance. Sample letters are included.

Brown, I. E. "Educational Advising at the Work Site: Stimulating Worker Interest in Education through a Network of Labor Education Advisers." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Academic Advising Association, Indianapolis, October 11–14, 1981.

Describes the Labor Educational Advising Project, which was inaugu-

rated in 1979 at Des Moines Area Community College to provide educational counseling for members of organized labor through a network of peer volunteers. Project activities included workshops to train eighty educational advisers and the development of curriculum materials for those workshops.

Creamer, D. G. "Meeting Counseling Needs of Evening and Part-Time Students through Community Service Management Strategies." *Community Services Catalyst,* 1979, *9* (3) 14–17.

Proposes self-help materials and activities, non-credit courses to deliver counseling services, and collaboration among selected professionals to deal with the problem of counseling inequity with regard to part-time and evening students.

Groff, W. H. "Higher Education as Catalyst for the Local Economy: Project Care—Retraining the Unemployed." Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Chicago, April 29–May 2, 1979.

Surveys the development and operation of Project Care III, an interagency effort involving area colleges, unions, industry, and state agencies in the retraining of five-hundred tire builders laid off in August 1978, when the Mansfield Tire and Rubber Company (Mansfield, Ohio) was shut down. Unemployed workers were queried as to their training needs and provided with vocational counseling at registration centers.

Harper, H., Herring, J., Kelly, J. T., and Schinoff, R. B. *Advisement and Graduation Information System.* Miami, Fla.: Miami-Dade Community College, 1981. 34 pp. (ED 197 776).

Outlines Miami-Dade's Advisement and Graduation Information System (AGIS), which, as an on-line computer aid for counseling staff, monitors students' progress in degree attainment. Discusses informational aids supplied by AGIS, including a realignment of stucent transcripts according to degree requirements, an automatic graduation certification, and a sequencing of recommended courses based on the student's background and goals.

Heise, H. A. "Point Counterpoint: Student Success Attributed to Placement of Guidance on the Academic Side." *Community and Junior College Journal,* 1982, *52* (5), 14, 16.

Delineates Indian River Community College's (Florida) reasons for placing the college guidance under the administrative authority of the dean of instruction. Specifies new roles for the dean of students, counselors, and student government. Records successes in terms of transfer rates, student government activities, and instructional programs.

Kapraun, E. D., and Stephenson, G. W. *Organizational Plan and Procedures for Integration of Centralized Counseling with Instructional Divisions.* Forest Park, Mo.: St. Louis Community College District, 1982. 29 pp. (ED 220 130).

Details the efforts of the Forest Park Campus of the St. Louis Community College District to (1) provide counseling and advising services to students and faculty in the instructional divisions while maintaining comprehensive services in a centralized counseling area; (2) facilitate the development of counselors as generalists; (3) develop an information base for effective counseling; and (4) coordinate counseling functions.

Kidd, R. E., and Embry, J. K. *Developing a Career Planning Center. Occupational Education Research Project Final Report.* Wilson, N.C.: Wilson County Technical Institution, 1981. 189 pp. (ED 205 725).

Offers a model for planning and implementing career planning centers at community colleges. Options for centers are suggested for three levels of development and staffing: self-directed, intermediate, and comprehensive. Sample forms and indexes are appended.

Mitchell, C., and Young, W. *A Course Approach to Academic Advising.* Mesa, Ariz.: Mesa Community College, 1979. 41 pp. (ED 192 833).

Discusses the planning, pilot implementation, and benefits of Assessment and Advisement 100, a one-credit, self-paced student development course offered at Mesa Community College (Arizona) to help students define their educational goals, develop a plan for the achievement of those goals, and correlate the goals with career selection. The course workbook is included.

Nelson, B. A. *The Development of an Experimental Advisement and Registration Process for New Students at Glendale Community College in Summer, 1979.* Glendale, Ariz.: Glendale Community College, 1980. 84 pp. (ED 197 770).

Summarizes the planning and development of an advisement and registration process. Details the altered physical layout of the registration stations, screening procedures, the shortened process for students who do not desire faculty advising, and procedures for class card distribution and fee payment. Identifies thirty guidance and informational materials developed for use by faculty advisers, student helpers and students.

Seppanen, L. J. "Improving Community College Advising Systems." *NASPA Journal,* 1981, *19* (2), 39–44.

Outlines a community college's intensive institutional effort to solve advising management problems and to develop mechanisms to assure maintenance of an effective system. Considers factors important in maintaining the system and implications for other institutions.

Streff, D. *Utilization of Cable Television to Provide Instruction and Information Services to CETA-Eligible Persons in Marshalltown. Project Report.* Marshalltown: Iowa Valley Community College District, 1981. 75 pp. (ED 222 224).

Summarizes a project that sought to identify and enroll at least fifteen CETA-eligible persons in each of three programs: "TV High School," designed to prepare viwers to take the General Educational Development high-school equivalency exam; "Voyage: Challenge and Change in Career/Life Planning," which stressed planning and personal responsibility; and "Food Stuff: Nutrition for the Family," which centered on budgeting, food selection, and preparation.

**Counseling Underprepared Students**

Boylan, H. "Academic Intervention in Developmental Education." *Journal of Developmental and Remedial Education,* 1980, *3* (3), 10–11.

Cites the inadequacy of traditional counseling services in helping developmental education students comprehend grading options, registration policies, and other components of the education bureaucracy. Suggests an academic intervention strategy to correct this situation, incorporating student orientation, systematic monitoring of student progress, and regular follow-up.

Friedlander, J. "Why Don't Poorly Prepared Students Seek Help?" Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Community Colleges, 1981. 14 pp. (ED 203 901).

Reviews a study undertaken to determine the extent to which counseling and institutional support services reach their intended audiences. Over six thousand students at a large urban community college were asked in a survey to (1) indicate their degree of confidence in their reading, writing, arithmetic, algebra, science, and study skills; (2) identify the support services they had used; and (3) state reasons for not using services.

Friedlander, J. *Innovative Approaches to Delivering Academic Assistance to Students.* Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Community Colleges, 1982. 20 pp. (ED 220 172).

Examines a study conducted to determine how student support services are meeting the needs of underprepared and part-time students and assisting in efforts to increase program completion rates. Study methodology involved telephone interviews with support service personnel in six large urban community college districts: Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Maricopa County, Miami-Dade, and St. Louis.

*Improving Student Motivation.* Austin: University of Texas, 1978. 48 pp. (ED 184 601).

Provides text and accompanying exercises in a two-part learning module that was designed to assist instructors in providing high-risk, nontraditional students with a sense of self-direction and control over their academic progress.

Johnson, J. A., and others. *One State's Efforts to Get Serious About the High Risk Student: Assessment, Faculty Advising, Career Planning, and Developing Education in Oregon's Community Colleges.* Salem: Oregon State Department of Education, 1980. 133 pp. (ED 188 732).

Provides four essays that review the literature and state of the art of assessment, developmental education, career development, and faculty advising at the community college level. Each essay includes a selected bibliography.

Robbins, W. A. "The Role of Counseling in Community College Developmental Programs: A Framework for Consideration." Paper presented at the Developmental Education Conference, Phoenix, Ariz., February 5, 1982. 22 pp. (ED 213 454).

Presents a five-part framework for developing effective counciling services for community college students in need of developmental education.

Roueche, J. E., and Armes, N. R. "Basic Skills Education: Point-Counterpoint." *Community and Junior College Journal,* 1980, *50* (6), 21-24.

Cites results of recent studies about deteriorating basic skills of community college students. Presents opposing views on developmental education by John Roueche and Arthur Cohen. Argues in favor of providing for underprepared students through specialized, developmental "intensive care units" built around prescriptive counseling and community and support groups.

**Counseling the Transfer Student**

Dallas, S. (Ed.). *Counseling Services to Facilitate Transfer. CSCC Bulletin, Issue 4.* Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Community Colleges, 1982.

Examines a May 1982 survey conducted to learn how student support services were used to encourage students to enroll in transfer programs and to facilitate student progress toward a degree. Involved in the survey were thirty-four community colleges in six multi-campus, urban districts.

Farland, R., and Cruz, J. *Identifying and Assisting Potential Transfer Students: Policies and Practices.* Sacramento: California Community Colleges, Office of the Chancellor, 1982. 53 pp. (ED 220 162).

Presents background, methodology, and findings of a survey of California community colleges that was designed to ascertain current and proposed policies and practices with respect to identifying and assisting potential transfer students and to maintaining effective articulation or liaison with high schools and baccalaureate-granting institutions.

Schinoff, R. B., and Kelly, J. T. "Improving Academic Advisement and Transfer Articulation Through Technology." In F. C. Kintzer (Ed.), *Improving Articulation and Transfer Relationships.* New Directions for Community Colleges, no. 39. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982.

Describes Miami-Dade Community College's computer-based Advisement and Graduation Information System (AGIS), which provides students with accurate, up-to-date information on their progress toward meeting graduation requirements and on courses recommended for transfer. Describes AGIS's six-phase development. Reviews AGIS's management applications, distribution of AGIS reports, and system benefits.

Strain, J. A. *Development of an Articulation Handbook.* El Dorado, Kans.: Butler Community College, 1982. 14 pp. (ED 215 729).

Outlines the activities involved in the development of an articulation handbook for transfer students at Butler County Community College (BCCC). Included in the notebook are program sheets listing program requirements at state-supported universities in Kansas and detailing BCCC equivalencies.

Thurston, A. *Report of the Chancellor's Counseling Advisory Committee.* Los Angeles: Los Angeles Community College District, 1981. 81 pp. (ED 211 162).

Presents recommendations focusing on the role of the counselor in helping students clarify and meet their academic, career, and personal objectives; basic skills assessment for entering students; mandatory placement; required college orientation; and support services for students intending to transfer.

**Counseling and Guidance for Special Populations**

Callandin, J. *Special Needs for Special People: Improving Vocational Guidance and Counseling for the Handicapped. Annual Report.* Charlottesville, Va.: Piedmont Virginia Community College, 1980. 36 pp. (ED 201 145).

Describes goals and objectives, implementation procedures, and results, evaluation, and recommendations of the Piedmont Virginia Community College project to improve vocational guidance and counseling for handicapped students. Forms and materials used in the program are appended.

*Career Counseling Materials and Techniques for Use With Vietnamese.* San Jose, Calif.: San Jose City and San Jose Community College and Districts, 1981. 329 pp. (ED 206 758).

Provides information related to the Vietnamese and their culture, approaches for providing career guidance for these clients, career assessment measures, and career education materials used successfully with the Vietnamese. Materials, in Vietnamese, are also included for use by Vietnamese clients.

Castro, R., and others. *Resource Guide for Career Counseling Spanish Speaking and Chicano Students.* San Jose, Calif.: San Jose City College, 1981. 255 pp. (ED 205 695).

Provides information related to student and language program assessment, techniques for retention, strategies for cooperative work experience programs, job search and interview techniques to be taught to students, and additional program development resources. Includes an annotated bibliography of Spanish language materials.

Eliason, C. *Equity Counseling for Community College Women.* Washington, D.C.: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1979. 291 pp. (ED 187 369).

Presents resource information and articles written by women educators and counselors. Topics include the role of counseling in eliminating the effects of sex stereotyping, institutional commitment to sex equity counseling, special needs of specific target populations, and exemplary counseling programs.

Hanks, M. *Careers for Homemakers (A Displaced Homemakers' Program).* St. Louis, Mo.: St. Louis Community College, 1982. 14 pp. (ED 222 225).

Delineates goals and activities of a vocational counseling program designed to help displaced homemakers enter the job market for the first time or after a significant absence. Career interest testing, job readiness skills workshops, job referrals, and other services are offered by the program.

Johnson, B. E. "Black Success: Counseling Is Crucial." *Community and Junior College Journal,* 1982, *53* (3), 36–38.

Noting employment trends indicating an increasing demand for skilled persons in high technology occupations and the paucity of black students in high technology studies, the author argues for increased efforts to guide black students into these fields. Reviews statistics on black unemployment and sources of inappropriate career guidance in black students' lives.

Katz, D., and others. *Career Counseling and Job Placement of Disabled Students at Two-Year Colleges: A Guide.* New York: City University of New York, Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education, 1979. 211 pp. (ED 187 352).

Presents information on the career development and placement of handicapped students for use by all specialists within a community college student personnel office. Case studies and an annotated bibliography are appended.

Miller, S. W. (Comp.). *Resources for Achieving Sex Equity: An Annotated Bibliography.* Los Angeles: Los Angeles Community College District, 1980. 44 pp. (ED 183 230).

Lists resources dealing with sex equity in vocational education. Specific topics covered include sex role definition, sex equity and law, career guidance, career options for women, and historical and ethical perspectives of working women.

Rollins, D. "Counseling Elderly Students in Community Colleges." Graduate seminar paper, University of Florida, 1979. 20 pp. (ED 180 551).

Notes that while the number of older students (aged fifty or over) attending two-year colleges is growing, the counseling needs of these individuals are often overlooked. Calls for administrative action to ensure that elderly students receive psychological as well as academic counseling. Provides references to relevant research studies.

Zendell, M. *The Displaced Homemaker Pilot Project Evaluation Study. Report Number 81-15.* Olympia: Washington State Council for Postsecondary Education, 1981. 98 pp. (ED 206 334).

Describes and evaluates Washington's Displaced Homemaker Pilot Project, a two-year program that established multi-purpose service centers to provide training, counseling, and support for displaced homemakers.

**Evaluating Counseling Staff**

Anderson, D. M. *Counselor Accountability Model of Grossmont College: A Working Paper.* El Cajon, Calif.: Grossmont College, 1981. 79 pp. (ED 214 581).

Describes an institutional accountability model that was developed in response to increased scrutiny of public education and the need for counselors to quantify and legitimate their work. States the general purposes of counseling and identifies nine specific counselor functions.

*Faculty Evaluation System: Counseling Faculty.* St. Louis, Mo.: St. Louis Community College, 1981. 66 pp. (ED 216 711).

Outlines procedures used by St. Louis Community College in its annual evaluation of counseling faculty performance. Details a number of performance indicators, levels of satisfactory and unsatisfactory achievement, and the schedule for evaluation implementation. Forms and instruments are included.

*Jim Palmer is the user-services librarian at ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, University of California at Los Angeles.*

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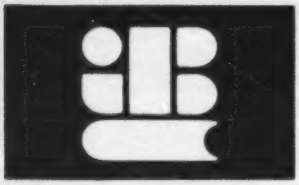

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*Since community colleges are serious about the quality of student development, there will need to be greater integration within the domain of student support services and between this function and the diverse instructional programs of community colleges. The learner, as well as the public and its representatives, will have increased confidence in the accountability of community colleges as they attend to the learning and career needs of students, design programs and services, and demonstrate learner outcomes through follow-up and other institutional studies. The authors of the chapters in this volume of* New Directions for Community Colleges *give their attention to ways of overcoming flaws in student support services that have been developed during the past decade.*

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